



**The note of pessimism in the poetry of  
Arthur Hugh Clough, James Thomson  
and Edward Fitzgerald**

**THESIS**

SUBMITTED FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF

**Doctor of Philosophy**  
IN  
**ENGLISH**

*By*

**SHABANA AIZAZ ZAIDI**

*Under the Supervision of*

**PROF. ASIF SHUJA**

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY  
ALIGARH (INDIA)

**2004**



T6977

**DEDICATED  
TO  
MY PARENTS**

*Prof. Asif Shuja*



DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
Aligarh Muslim University  
Aligarh - 202002 (India)

Dated: 22.3.04

## **CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the Ph.D. thesis entitled "**The note of pessimism in the poetry of Arthur Hugh Clough, James Thomson and Edward Fitzgerald**," submitted by **Miss. Shabana Aizaz Zaidi** under my supervision for the award of **Doctor of Philosophy in English**, is the result of her own endeavour. She is allowed to submit her thesis for the award of Ph.D. in the Department of English, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh.

*Asif Shuja*  
(Prof. Asif Shuja)  
Supervisor

## **CONTENTS**

	<b>Page No.</b>
<b>Acknowledgement</b>	
<b>Chapter I      Introduction</b>	<b>1 - 10</b>
<b>Chapter - II    Pessimism in the Poetry of                       Arthur Hugh Clough</b>	<b>11 - 42</b>
<b>Chapter - III   Pessimism in the Poetry of                       James Thomson</b>	<b>43 - 80</b>
<b>Chapter - IV   Pessimism in the Poetry of                       Edward Fitzgerald</b>	<b>81 - 101</b>
<b>Chapter - V    Conclusion</b>	<b>102 - 110</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>111 - 118</b>

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*In the name of Almighty Allah, the present writer is deeply and sincerely grateful to her supervisor, Prof. Asif Shuja (Professor, Department of English and Modern European Languages, A.M.U. Aligarh) for her valuable suggestions, regular guidance and constructive criticism at every stage of this thesis. In fact, her interest, help, sympathy, erudite, meticulous and talented guidance has been much greater than what she deserved. She will ever treasure her encouragement and motivation*

*She expresses her sincere gratitude to Prof. Adnan Raza (Chairman, Department of English and Modern Languages, A.M.U. Aligarh) for his support and co-operation in various ways, she bestow her indebtedness and profound sense of gratitude for (Late) Prof. M.K. Lodi, Prof. Farhatullah Khan, Prof. Wigar Hussain and Dr. Rahtullah Khan (Department of English, A.M.U.) for their valuable and helpful suggestions.*

*She deems it a privilege to mention her deep sense of reverence to Mr. Abdul Wajid Khan (retd. teacher of City School) for his advice, keen interest and valuable suggestions.*

*She is indebted to the Bodlian Library Oxford University, London. The British Council Library, New Delhi, National Library, Calcutta; Maulana Azad Library, Seminar Libraries of the Department of Persian and English, A.M.U. Aligarh for their assistance in the form of books and xeroxed materials.*

*She would like to express her gratitude to her friends and research mates.*

*Finally, she feels pride and privilege for her esteemed parents, brothers Dr. Zaid Bin Aizaz Zaidi, Faisal Bin Aizaz Zaidi, uncle Dr. I.H. Zaidi, aunt Shadab Zaidi and other family members, without whose blessings, love, support and co-operation, she would not have been able to pursue her work.*

*Last but not least she is sincerely thankful to Mr. H.K. Sharma who very painstakingly typed the manuscript despite his very busy schedule.*

*Shabana Aizaz*  
**(SHABANA AIZAZ ZAIDI)**

# ***Chapter - I***

## **INTRODUCTION**



The present study examines the way in which Arthur Hugh Clough, James Thomson and Edward Fitzgerald, the poets of melancholic tradition, expressed their concern with the problems of their own time. A thorough study has been made of all the poems in which they expressed their sorrow. This study aims at an indepth analysis of the melancholic theme in the poetry of Arthur Hugh Clough, James Thomson and Edward Fitzgerald, and at co-relating this with the problems of their age.

These poets of pessimistic strain belonged to the Victorian age. The Victorian age saw a conflict between science and religion. The doctrine of evolution had completely revolutionized all current ideas about nature, man and society. A vast upheaval in thought was the consequence of this rapid progress and popularisation of knowledge; new theories came into conflict with old faiths, the ancient intellectual order was shaken at its foundations. Hence, the Victorian age was marked throughout by the prominence of the spirit of inquiry, criticism, scepticism, religious uncertainty, spiritual struggle and unrest; the literature of this age was considerably modified by the impact of science.

The questioning spirit in Clough, the pessimism of James Thomson, the fatalism of Fitzgerald, resulted from the sceptical tendencies evoked by scientific research. They laid greater emphasis on the poetry of reason and paved the way for the intellectualisation of emotional life. These poets of pessimistic strain attained some popularity in their own time but soon after the turn of century, their popularity began to decline rapidly and now they are almost forgotten. Thus, this neglected attitude towards poets, whose poems were the source of information about that age which was the most remarkable period of English literature, is discouraging for those who were inspired by these poets. It is hoped that present study will highlight the significance and contribution of Arthur Hugh Clough, James Thomson and Edward Fitzgerald which will increase the number of these poets readers.

Many studies have appeared on the life and poetry of these poets, but no attempt has so far been made to link them into one. The present study intends to do so. The aim of this study is to examine the works of the poets individually from pessimistic point of view. It begins with the study of Clough's poems who was the mouthpiece of his

age, and who made it his conscious subject more than most of his contemporaries. In recent years, many important studies of Clough have appeared and the writers of these studies have explored the relation of Clough's work to the political, moral and social realities of the Victorian age. For example, Michael Timko's Innocent Victorian (1960) highlights Clough's thought and declares that he was positive in response to life, David Williams's Too Quick Despairer (1969) is the biography of Clough and deals with the life and works of poet; Green Berger examines Clough's opinions about politics, religion and society in his book, "Arthur Hugh Clough, Growth of a poet's Mind (1962); Lady Chorley's The Uncommitted Mind(1970) has described the seeming irregularity and contradictions in Clough's behaviour and poetry to his being essentially 'Uncommitted'. But none of these studies made Clough's questioning attitude its focus, which is reflected in his verses. This study is an attempt in this direction. Clough was concerned with the religious, political and social issues of his time, and his poetry, particularly his three major narrative works, deal with the life and society of Victorian age. An attempt has been made to assess the specific quality of Clough's pessimistic outlook in his poems.

Clough's first work, *The Bothic of Tober-na-Vuolich*, is a narrative poem in hexameter and deal with the problems of Victorian age. Clough's attitude towards women is reflected in this poem. His sympathy for poor men and anger towards rich people is quite obvious in this poem.

His next poem *Amours de Voyage* is a representative poem of the age, exhibiting the doubts and uncertainties of the period in which he lived. The poem stands as a landmark of the age characterized by the paralysis of action through doubt, and lack of real purpose brought about by the conflicting claims of religion and science which held that age in its grip.

Clough's *Dipsychus* is a remarkable work in the field of pessimistic and meloncholic poetry. It depicts the conflict between science and religion, highlighting the doubts and conflicts as well as marring the life of the people of the age. The spirit of this poem is carried forward in a number of smaller poems, such as *The New Sinai*, *Qui Laborate*, *Orat*, *Easter day* and *Naples*.

Clough tried to come out of the swirling current of pessimism and uncertainty as can be noticed in his self-comforting and hope inspiring poem : *Say Not The Struggle*

*Nought Availeth*; but he could not be successful in his attempt. The overpowering force of despair at the loss of faith could not make him another Robert Browning of his age, rather he remained a half-hewn Matthew Arnold.

James Thomson is not regarded a great poet, but is of historical interest because of the expression of the characteristic pessimism of the late Victorian age. His place in literary history is, perhaps, most appropriately fixed in proximity to the poet of doubt and of 'the sceptical reaction'. He is popularly known as the poet of one poem, *The City of Dreadful Night*, which is so distinctively individual and sincere an utterance springing from the depths of the poet's own feeling and experience, and is so powerful and original work in itself, as to make it the one supreme achievement in verse by which Thomson is, and probably will be, remembered.

But it is not fair to judge the range and variety of his poetical powers by *The City of Dreadful Night* alone. There are other poems as *Weddah and Omæ-el Bonain*, *The Doom of a City*, *To Our Ladies of Death* and *Insomnia* which are less powerful than 'The City' but exhibit his range of interest and skill as a versifier. These poems in which he

expresses his grief are the works of that time when he was surrounded by the controversial tendencies. The gloom and despair that envisage the poems are due largely to the many dissappointments he had suffered. These poems have not been discussed by the critics in detail. The present study is an attempt in this direction. The work on Thomson is concerned with poet's life and all his pessimistic poems. Its aim is to analyse all those poems of James Thomson in which he presents the negative and hopeless aspects of life. These poems reflect not only the poet's life and thought but also the spirit of age, and without its study, it is difficult to understand poet's approach towards life. This analysis has been approached through a careful study of poet's life and his poems. Some books which have appeared on James Thomson are : Mr. S. Salt's The Life of James Thomson (London, 1914) in which he sketches the life and character of the poet; one more book on same pattern is Betram Dobell's The Laureate of Pessimism (1910). Meeker James Edward also deals with the life of James Thomson in his book, 'The Life and Poetry of James Thomson (1917). Thus there is no work which discusses all pessimistic poems of Thomson. This is the first time, such an investigation is made in this area.

Last poet, who is being discussed in this study, is Edward FitzGerald. It is the translation of 'Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam' which made him a well known poet. Though there are many books on Edward FitzGerald and his translation of 'Rubaiyat', but they discuss FitzGerald as a translator and not as a pessimist who was influenced by his age. The aim of this study is to highlight the pessimism of Rubaiyat which was the outcome of that age in which poet was living. This translation has the force and beauty of an original work. FitzGerald tried to keep to the spirit of the original work in his translation though he varied the theme according to the needs of the Victorian age. It is an attempt to examine those aspects which reflect victorian nature in 'Rubaiyat'. Some books which give information about FitzGerald's life and discuss 'Rubaiyat' are : A.J. Arberry's (1952) The Romance of the Rubaiyat 'The Quatrain of Omar Khayyam' by E.H. Whimfield, A.C. Benson's Edward FitzGerald (1905), Robert Graves and Omar Ali Shah's The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam (1967). All these books deal with many themes in 'Rubaiyat' and not particularly with pessimism. This study tries to analyse 'Rubaiyat' from pessimistic point of view. The entire work is marked with a note of pessimism and despair. It lays emphasis on the power of destiny in human life. In 'Rubaiyat' FitzGerald lays emphasis on hedonism grounded

on scepticism. It is Victorian both in mood and in poetic apparatus, and akin to the victorian elegiac mood.

This pessimistic note in the work of these poets which belong to the same period justify this saying that a work of literature is rooted in its age and in the life of its author. After analysing the works of these writers, a relation between the spirit of the age and pessimism was discovered. The social, political and religious environment, in which the poets breathed is obviously reflected in their works.

During the Victorian age, English society was torn between faith and doubt due to the scientific discoveries. The publication of 'The Origin of Species' by Darwin started a new era. On the other hand, the industrial revolution of the age transformed the agrarian economy of England into an industrial economy, it created social unrest and economic distress among the masses. A section of people became very rich and their wealth rested on labourers. The rich did almost no work and possessed more to waste than to eat. The poor had to exhaust himself even to get a poor subsistence. Misery, disease, starvation and death were almost as common in poor section as luxuries and

**JHE514**



voluptuousness in the rich class. This woeful and deplorable condition of labourers soon caught the eyes of social reformers and a few literary artists of this age and they struck the note of revolt against the materialistic tendencies of the age in which Tennyson, Arnold, Ruskin were inspired by a conscious moral purpose to uplift and instruct their countrymen. Arthur Hugh Clough also joined them and his poetry reflects his deep-rooted concern for the upliftment of mankind and its all-round emancipation. This study concentrates on those social issues which are raised by Clough.

Alienation was the problem from which each poet was suffering and the main cause behind this alienation was the dissatisfaction with that society in which he lived. This problem of alienation has been taken up by James Thomson in his poetry. His famous poem *The City of Dreadful Night* is the best expression of this feeling. Victorian age was a restless age. Nothing was certain and everyone was in doubt. This feeling of uncertainty could be seen in the translation of 'Rubaiyat' by Fitzgerald. One thing is certain and that is death, it is the key note of this poem and it has been discussed in this study.

Thus the present thesis is an attempt to examine the pessimistic outlook of the poets under study. This is an area which needs proper investigation. It is hoped that this study will lead to further research in various other hidden aspects in the works of Arthur Hugh Clough, James Thomson and Edward Fitzgerald. A possible enquiry could be in the form of a comparative study of the pessimistic and optimistic approaches of these writers as in their early phase of life they had positive thinking and it was the influence of their circumstances which compelled them to see the dark side of life.

***Chapter - II***

**PESSIMISM IN THE POETRY OF  
ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH**

Arthur Hugh Clough was a representative victorian poet. He was living in a period which was specially characterised by a profound spiritual unrest, brought about mainly by the far reaching discoveries of science and Biblical criticism. In this period we encounter the clash and fusion of old and new on every side. The result of this social and religious disturbance was the appearance of the note of pessimism. This temper generally occurs in the period of transition when the lack of stability and permanence arises a feeling of insecurity in human mind. Victorian period was the period of change and this fact may be seen in works of most of the poets of this time.

In the changing world, poets worked under the shadow and burden of a conscious social responsibility. The victorian literary artists were inspired by a social zeal to represent the problems of their own age. Among these poets, Clough was much more concerned, directly or indirectly with the social, political, religious and literary movements of his time. He was influenced by some new ideas and did agree with many of them but not completely.

He is the typical victorian poet voicing in his poetry the hopes and aspirations, doubts and scepticism refined culture and religious liberalism of the age. His entire work in poetry is intellectual in character and is marked with introspective self-analysis and self-delineation. His poetry expressed with great sincerity, the spiritual unrest that was corroding his spirit. The feeling of misery and melancholy to be witnessed in the works of Clough was due to the philosophical, religious and social changes brought about by the development of science.

Clough's personal experiences have reflection on his poetical works. His poetry is the poetry of information. He was disappointed by the attitudes of political parties. He felt that no one was interested in solving the problems of lower class, and this disappointment is reflected in his poetry. For Clough, poetry was basically the disclosure of a man's character, the reflection of his nature and the verbal expression of his inner most being.

Besides social unrest, there were many other personal causes which made him a pessimistic<sup>1</sup> He had had to learn very early to accept unhappy facts and make something of his life in spite of them. Clough's particular

experiences made him almost a prototype of the deracinated man, for he suffered from the experience of being uprooted many times, intellectually emotionally, socially, and religiously. Cut off from his family, his family's love, and from his country (however alien he had been in America it was all he knew) at the age of ten, from faith at twenty, from effective power in politics by circumstances and history, from ancestral ties and from the upper and business classes alike by training and education, and finally by his own acts from the present — Oxford — and the future — his career — he serves as a kind of paradigm of the man who has experienced alienation it is the triumph of his best poetry that it speaks of that condition, rather than hides it".

Clough's first long poetical work is *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich* a narrative poem in hexametre set in the scottish Highland. It is a large work in every sense than any of his later worrying poems. It was composed just after he left Oxford. Clough's loss of religious belief just after he left Rugby is, undeniably, the central fact in his life. When he lost the direction which Dr. Arnold's moral earnestness had supplied, he lost his sense of purpose in life.

*The Bothie*, is the story of those Oxford students who visit Scotland with their tutor, Adam. One of them, Phillip, who is the hero of this poem, falls in love with Elspie, the daughter of the 'thin man clad as a saxon'. Phillip is the representative of modern age while his tutor Adam represents middle age who believes in old custom and tradition. So in response of Phillip's wish to marry Elspie, Adam gives him advice not to marry her because of class distinction. Phillip rejects this suggestion and gives his views on this system. He is a modern man and believes in equality. His sensitivity to the limitations imposed by class barriers is a current theme which has been discussed in this poem. He is not satisfied with the privileges the higher class to whom he belongs, enjoys. He does not believe in those old traditions which reveal a difference between high and low. He expressed his views about social inequality ∴

2"I am sorry to say your providence puzzles me  
sadly;  
Children of Circumstance are we to be? your  
answer, oh no wise!  
Where does circumstance end, and Providence  
where begins it?  
What are we to resist, and what are we to be  
friends with?  
If there is battle, 'tis battle by night: I stand in the  
darkness,...

Yes, I could find in my heart to cry,  
 notwithstanding my Elspie,  
 O that the armies indeed were arrayed! O joy of  
 the onset!  
 Sound, than Trumpet of God, come forth, Great  
 Cause, to array us,  
 King and leader appear, thy soldiers sorrowing  
 seek thee."

He appears to be extremely upset about social injustice. Throughout the poem, there is a controversy with the world. He depicts faithfully the spirit of the age, the paralysis of faith through doubt, the lack of purpose, the superficiality. This poem deals with those social problems which were being discussed by the more thoughtful minds of that time. Clough was largely a disciple of Goethe; and his influence could be seen both in the form and thought of *The Bothie*, at the same time the poem reflects the intellectual atmosphere of Oxford.

Social unrest was the great distinguishing feature of the Victorian era and the demand for social justice coloured the whole thought of the time. Clough's thought on this topic is reflected in *The Bothie*. He was much affected by the social unrest which was the result of scientific development. The industrial advancement created social unrest and economic distress among the masses. The impact of this



advancement was worse on labourers. Their condition was miserable. They were forced to live in wretched condition. The condition of children and women was also not satisfactory. Clough faithfully reflected this aspect of victorian life in *The Bothie*. His repulsion towards rich class and sympathy for labourers and poor could be noticed in these lines:

3"Often I find myself saying, and know not myself  
as I say it.

What of the poor and the weary? their labour and  
pain is needed.

Perish the poor and the weary! What can they  
batter than perish,

Perish is labour for her, who is worth the  
destruction of empires?

What! for a mite, for a mote, an impalpable odour  
of honour,

Armies shall bleed; cities burn; and the soldier  
red from the storming

Carry hot rancour and lust into chambers of  
mothers and daughters.

What would ourselves for the cause of an hour  
encounter the battle,

Slay and be slain; lie rotting in hospital, hulk, and  
prison;

Die as a dog dies; die mistaken perhaps, and  
dishnoured.

Yea, - and shall hodmen in beer-shops complain  
of a glory denied them,

The impact of science was not limited only to the society. Religion was also affected by the scientific advancements. In this sphere, a marked spiritual disturbance, which struck the time-honoured edifice of Christian values, could be seen. The application of the historical method to the study of the Bible resulted in the development of 'the higher criticism' which not only had disturbing effects upon orthodox believers but also induced scepticism and pessimism in sensitive souls like Clough. He had firm faith in christianity but side by side was influenced by scientific achievements. Science was progressing day by day. The advancement of science, however, shook the very foundation of faith and religion. As a result, man and women had become restless in a fast-moving and fast-changing world. So in this restless situation the hero of *The Bothie* speaks directly of looking for guidance and finding none :

4 "I stand in the darkness,  
 Here in the mêlée of men, Ionian and Dorian on  
       both sides,  
 Signal and password known; which is friend and  
       which is foeman?  
 Is it a friend? I doubt, though he speak with the  
       voice of a brother".

This poem deals with the problems of women in Victorian society. In that era women were pushed to a lower place. They were expected to cultivate domestic virtues, rear up children and look after home. Education was a closed book for most of the women. Phillip's permission to Elspie to read his book is a revolt against this injustice. He is in favour of giving more liberty to women. He likes those girls who are attractive and intellectual. He hates artificiality and likes natural beauty. He does not like those high born girls who are like dolls. This poem presents the ideal of true womanhood. The whole poem is a protest against the conception of feminine grace and embellishment as consisting of vulgar decoration and intellectual insipidity.

<sup>5</sup>"Clough's attitude to women is, indeed, developed at length in the poem. It is a forward looking attitude, much in advance of his time."

Most of the Victorian poets were suffering from alienation and *The Bothie* speaks about this alienation. The hero of this poem, Phillip feels isolated because he is unable to adjust with the society. His views are totally different from those persons who follow traditions and customs so Phillip revolt against these, because they are

based on inequality. He believes that all men have been created by God so there should be no discrimination.

<sup>6</sup>"All the work of His hand hath disposed in a  
wonderful order?

Who hath made man, as the beasts, to live the one  
on the other,

Who hath made man as Himself to know the law-and  
accept it!

But Adam does not agree with him. Phillip's alienation is different from two other heroes of Clough. <sup>7</sup>"The reasons behind Phillip's alienation are clearly definable in external, logical causes which are primarily social and political. He is uncomfortable in his society on principle, because it denies equality and subjugates man to man and woman to man". The complexity of modern life is reflected in *The Bothie*. According to Clough, the social situation no less than the religion is responsible for the crumbling down of many of the intellectual and moral values.

*The Bothie* deals with all those problems which are waiting for solution. This is Clough's first long poem which tells about the inner conflict of the poet, <sup>8</sup>"This was his first long poem, and gives us a just a view of his capabilities and temperament. For all its play of humourous fancy, there is a deep underlying seriousness in the poem, and a sensitive

appreciation of the weightiness of modern social problems".

His second long poem is *Amours-de-Voyage* which he composed during his visit to Rome in 1849. It has been written in the form of letter series, telling the story of an English man's love affair in Italy during the Italian Revolution. It is a representative poem of the age and exhibits the doubts and uncertainties of the period in which the poet lived. It is more a series of reflections on contemporary problems than a tale of incidents and events. Those letters which have been written by an English man, Claude, from Rome, Florence, Begind. Lucca and other towns give information about the culture, art, and religion of Rome. Claude, who had heard a lot about the Rome, is now disappointed. He wrote to his friend Eustace :

9"Rome disappoints me much;  
     I hardly as yet understand, but  
*Rubbishly* seems the word that  
     most exactly would suit it.  
 All the foolish destructions,  
     and all the sillier savings,  
 All the incongruous things of past  
     incompatible ages.  
 Seem to be treasured up here to  
     make fools of present and future".

He also tells his friend about that revolution which was going on in Rome. His comments on this topic reflect

his ideas. He is in favour of this fighting which is for freedom. He has sympathy for the Italian people but is not ready to do something practically. In response to his friend's question 'why you not fight' ? He gives many causes :

<sup>10</sup>"In the first place, I haven't so much as a musket;  
 In the next, if I had, I shouldn't know how I should use it;  
 In the third, just at present I'm studying ancient marbles;  
 In the fourth, I consider I owe my life to my country".

Claude is a confused person who is unable to take a decision at right time. This poem sums up Clough's attitude towards life and religion. Claude's refusal to compromise results in his defeat. His hesitation on making decision is the root cause of his failure. <sup>11</sup>"He is always in a state of flux and reflux of thought. He cannot make up his mind whether he likes the girl, or whether he would take the trouble to save her life if she was in danger".

Claude finds a very little difference between politics, religion and society. In all these spheres, custom and convention are the standards of morality and behaviour. All are governed by artificiality. He is worried

because of the condition of religion. He finds no Christian faith.

<sup>12</sup>"No, the christian faith, as I, at least,  
understood it,  
Is not here, O Rome, in any of these thy churches;  
Is not here, but in Freiburg, or Rhims or  
Westminster Abbey".

He writes the detail of war which was going on in Italy. This war made the condition of country worse. He gives the picture of that city which is facing war.

<sup>13</sup>"Ere I leave, the caffe is empty,  
Empty too the streets, in all its length the corso  
Empty, and empty I see to my right and left the  
condotti".

He also writes about his inability to take action against injustice, which he hates. He is seeing the bloodshed but he can't give witness :

<sup>14</sup>"So, I have seen a man killed !  
An experience that, among others !  
Yes, I suppose I have : although I can hardly be  
certain,  
And in a court of justice could never declare I  
had seen it".

Clough's sympathy for these revolutionists was based on personal observation. He is disappointed with the failure of revolutionists. This failure reminds him of the

reform of England which was brought by the working class of his country. He blames England for this defeat because it had refused to help Italian people. He has hatred for the Pope and France who were disloyal towards Italians. He writes :

<sup>15</sup>"I nevertheless, let me say it, could in my soul  
 of souls,  
 this day, with the Gaul at the gates, shed One  
 true tear for thee, This poor little Roman  
 republic !  
 What, with the German restored with Sicily safe  
 to the Bourbon,  
 Not leave one poor corner for native Italian  
 exertion ?  
 France, it is foully done".

Doubt and struggle were the ruling tendencies of Clough's time and this poem reflects the influence of these tendencies on poet. Claude, the hero of this poem, is always in doubt. This poem is a love story in battle-ground. Claude is telling about revolution, side by side, he gives information about the progress of his love affair with Mary Trevellyn. He is attracted towards her but is not ready to admit this fact. His hesitation to acknowledge his feelings for Mary, is due to that hatred, which he has for the class, she belongs.



<sup>16</sup>"Middle-class people these, bankers very likely  
not wholly  
Pure of the taint of the shop".

He feels ashamed of his love affair because of his hatred for the people belonging to that strata of society as he does not want to have any association with them,

<sup>17</sup>"Is it, — the horrible pleasure of pleasing  
inferior people?  
I am ashamed my own self; and yet true it is, if  
disgraceful  
That for the first time in life I am living and  
moving with freedom".

Although this is a simple story, there lies a deep sincerity in it. <sup>18</sup>"But the sincerity of the *Amours-de-Voyage* is the painful sincerity of a man scrupulously anxious not to think too well of himself or too hopeful of life. The power displayed is often the power of insight into the under-side of human nature - into the doubts, weakness, and self-distrust, after some transient outburst of the old enthusiasm".

Claude, is a mouthpiece of the age in which Clough was living, and that age was going through changes. Everyone was in dilemma about religious beliefs and scientific theories. So the effect of age could be seen in this poem. <sup>19</sup>"Claude, the hero of this epic, in a dressing gown,

goes hither and thither like a blown leaf. Rome, which he finds 'merely marvellous mass of broken and castaway wine-pots', profoundly disappoints him".

This is the reason that he fails to get his love. When he is successful in taking a decision, he finds that Travellyen's has left Rome because of war. He goes behind them but misses them everytime. Till now he is not very much enthusiastic. He follows them half heartedly. At last he gives up the chase. He says :

<sup>20</sup>"Let me, then, bear to forget her.  
I will not cling to her falsely;  
Nothing factitious or forced shall important  
I will let myself go, forget, not try to remember".

But it is very difficult. He makes a declaration about himself that he is a coward. He feels that he is weak.

<sup>21</sup>"But it is odd when it comes. So plumb  
I the deeps of depression,  
Daily in deeper, and find no  
Support, no will, no purpose  
All my old strengths are gone".

He blame to faith for this failure

<sup>22</sup>"Great is fate, and is best".

And he decides to seek knowledge which is more important than love. Although

<sup>23</sup>"Knowledge is hard to seek, harder get to adhere  
do.

Knowledge is painful often; and yet when we  
know,  
We are happy".

Thus in the end of poem the hero has achieved nothing. <sup>24</sup>"It is a serious theme treated in a satiric manner, and the appeal of the poem lies in the universality of this theme : the conflict between absolute idealism and practical realism. Claude is, in this sense, Everyman who must face the problem of reconciling one's theories with the harsh realities of every day practices. His failure, dramatized in terms of his conflict over the natural and artificial, is his refusal to make any kind of compromise". His uncompromising attitude is the main cause behind his alienation. This alienation is different from Philip's alienation as Philip is against the inequality or injustice. But Claude's loneliness is due to his hesitation. Although he considers all those events which are going on around him but when some action is required then he keeps himself away both in love and war. <sup>25</sup>"Amours-de-Voyage is about a different kind of alienation, alienation from the self. Written in 1849-1850, the period when Clough said he 'could have gone cracked at time', the title of this poem is

ironic, for love is something like all feelings – that the hero can not experience. The poem may well be Clough's masterpiece on account of the perfect harmony that subsists between what might be called the objective correlative - the complicated civil and foreign war being waged in the streets of Rome, and the war, equally futile, downed, and piecemeal - like the man whom Clough saw incongruously carrying a canon ball through placid streets – going on inside Claude The hero, like Rome, is waiting, latent, hoping to erupt into decisive feeling but unable and unwilling to do so at the right time".

The poem stands as a landmark of the age, characterized by paralysis of action through doubt, and lack of real purpose brought about by the conflicting claims of religion and science.

Clough's most ambitious and long work is *Dipsychus* which represents various aspects of his thought. This poem consists of a series of dialogues between the poet and an attendant spirit. The theme of this poem is the conflict between the tender conscience and the outside world. It is a remarkable work in the field of pessimistic and melancholic poetry. The purpose of *Dipsychus* is to depict a

spirit divided against itself in its battle with good and evil, pleasure and pain, faith and doubt, and all the most complex problems of life. In this poem we see the traces of the intellectual and religious struggle that began at Oxford.

<sup>26</sup>"Clough wrote *Dipsychus* under the impulse of the shocks his intellect and emotions had been receiving and in this poem there is nothing to fight for except perhaps the veryself".

That was the age, when scientific discoveries were challenging religious belief and everyone was in dilemma. Those changes which were made by science in religious sphere were not acceptable to conservatives. Clough was also influenced by the religious controversies of his time.

<sup>27</sup>"He passes through the great sinful streets of Naples, and sees there the result of nineteen centuries of so-called christianity; and the sight rings from him the cry.

Christ is not risen, no -

He lies and moulders low, christ is not risen".

He is shocked by the present condition of religion. In the modern life no ancient opinion no old tradition, no old age belief is safe. The meaning of morality and religion has undergone a marked change. He is not happy with this

change in religious sphere but is unable to act immediately and this paralysis of action is mocked by the spirit. The spirit tries to convince him for submission to the ways of the world which are not too honest. *Dipsychus* finds it difficult. He insists on making a compromise between two different tendencies. He gives stress to connect the religion with daily life. He is in favour of patching up with science if time demands and in this way he is like Phillip who felt the need of compromise between old and modern values. But he is more courageous and practical than any two other heroes of Clough's poem because he faces the situation and does not escape from reality like Philip, on the other hand:

28 "The spirit ... then, is a representative of the two extremes which any man must avoid : This compound of convention and impiety. This mongrel of uncleanness and propriety.' He seems to uphold either the freest license in all things - sex, religion, politics - with utmost propriety. For him, no compromise is possible".

Thus throughout the poem, there is a controversy between the views of *Dipsychus* and the spirit. The spirit insists that he should enjoy every moment of this life and not to think about right or wrong. But *Dipsychus* hesitates

to perform that act which is against religion. When spirit fails to convince Dipsychus for submission then it asks him to follow the customs and rules of church. So the spirit is in favour of choosing a path between two ways and follow that strictly but Dipsychus insists on finding the compromise between two extremes. This is the attitude of a victorian which was forced to make a balance between science and religion. He wants to enjoy the new scientific discoveries but not at the cost of religion. *Dipsychus* is a representative poem of that age in which religion was questioned by scientific theories. <sup>29</sup>"...Dipsychus, unlike Claude, realizes the need for flexibility and growth of the human spirit. With his realistic attitude and his recognition of the positive qualities of naturalism, he comes to know that to face the truth is to have change, change that often involves the deepest kind of pain".

*Dipsychus* reflects Clough's views on religion. It gives the information about Clough's struggle in those days when the poet was suffering much more. He reveals all his experiences in this poem. He finds that the meaning of morality has been changed and he is confused in this new phase. He finds it difficult to decide whether to accept or reject it:

<sup>30</sup>"I am rebuked a sense of incomplete, of a completion over-soon assumed, of adding up too soon.

What we call sin,  
I could believe a painful opening out,  
Of paths for ampler virtue."

According to Clough, there is only one solution, which can solve the problems of man and that is to make religion a way of life, if religion is connected to the daily life it can be helpful for man. This is the attitude which gives idea about his strong faith in christianity. Religion imposes a duty on its follower to work for human being. This duty to serve the community would encourage people to help each other. Clough was deeply concerned with the problems of his age and in *Dipsychus* he deals with those problems which have universal appeal. The essential hesitation in modern thought and the problem of alienation has been expressed by him more clearly than any other poet of the age. <sup>31</sup>"In *Dipsychus* he sees that the machine was a symbol of man's dehumanization and alienation in the modern world."

*Dipsychus* is a poem of much deeper significance, in which the representative of idealism is defeated by the spirit of the world. *Dipsychus*, beginning to tire of inaction



and fruitless thinking, decides to find out the terms of surrender to the spirit. But this surrender is not a victory of spirit :

<sup>32</sup>"Not for thy service, thou imperious fiend,  
Not to do thy work, or the like of thine;  
Not to please thee, O base and fallen spirit!  
But one most High, Most True, whom without  
thee it seems I can not."

This submission is a compromise as the only solution of that problem which was the outcome of the scientific development. Clough is in favour of taking risk for knowledge.

<sup>33</sup>"What we call sin,  
I could believe a painful opening out  
Of paths for ampler virtue. The bare field,  
Scant with lean ears of harvest, long had mocked.  
The vest laborious farmer. Came at length  
The deep plough in the lazy under-soil.  
Down driving, with acry earth's fibres crack,  
And a few month, and lo! the golden leas,  
And autumn's crowded shocks and loaded wains

Like Keat's Ode to Autumn, these lines reflect Clough's full recognition of man's need for both joy and grief and his spiritual capacity to encompass both."

Clough's poetry is informative of the age he was living in. There were certain doubts, which made poet restless and he chooses poetry as the medium to express

his inner feeling. *Dipsychus* contains more of himself than any other poem. Through the debate between spirit and *Dipsychus*, Clough is expressing his views on religion and its association with society. The religion, to whom Clough belonged was divided in different sects and this discrimination started a criticism on religion. The result was the failure of christianity because due to different views these sects were unable to satisfy wholly the spiritual longing of man and this was the reason that man started rethinking about his religion. This conflict has been expressed by Clough in *Dipsychus*.

<sup>34</sup>"*Dipsychus* like the *Amours*, is a poem about human action and the conditions governing it. Always Clough is conscious of a tension within himself. The instinctive, natural man pulls one way....The conditioned man on the other hand, the successor of the boy who had sat too long and listened too hard in Rugby Chapel, pulls another way."

Among victorian readers Clough was best known for his earlier short poems. These short poems were published in a volume called *Ambravalia*. These poems reflect the spiritual conflict of his oxford days and are the truest

expression of the moral and intellectual tendencies, the doubt and struggle towards settled convictions of the period in which he lived. He suffered because he could not conform to the narrow standards of his age. His mind was engaged with the religious controversies at that time when he should have concentrated on his education. He was deeply influenced by the theological controversies of the time at Oxford.

<sup>35</sup>"...Clough was in trouble always concerning his waning faith; he could not help regretting the creeds which he had outgrown. He wished to 'send his soul into the invisible', and yet was confronted always by visible realities. He hankered after the solution of the problems of life, and was driven back upon doubt."

These short poems have been written at a time when Clough's life was absorbing new influences and qualifying old beliefs. He was convinced with this view that basic beliefs should be re-examined and higher criticism could help to restore man's faith in religion by clearing away all unnecessary dogma and ritual. But this criticism should not be used as a means of attack upon christianity. He makes fun of the conventional religious practices and

beliefs of his time but perhaps behind this is an idea, to change the attitude of contemporaries towards religion. In *The Latest Decalogue* he asks man to do the right things and not to take religion as a comfortable convention.

<sup>36</sup>"Though shalt have one God only, who would  
be at the expense of two?  
No graven images may be worshipped, except the  
currency. Swear not at all, for thy  
Thine enemy is none the worse:  
At church on sunday to attend  
Will serve to keep the world thy friend.  
...Thou shalt not steal, an empty feat when it's so  
lucrative to cheat".

The main idea which is present in almost every poem is that everyone should perform do to-day's duty and rest leave to God. This idea of duty as service is the theme of many short poems as in "*I have seen higher holier things than these*". According to him :

<sup>37</sup>"The summum pulchrum rests in heaven  
above.  
Do thou, as best thou may it thy duty do.  
Amid the things allowed thee live and love;  
Some day than shalt it view."

In "*Hope ever more and believe, Oman*" the stress on duty is continued :

<sup>38</sup>"Not for the gain of the gold, for the getting, the  
 hoarding, the having,  
 But for the joy of the deed;  
 But for the duty to do."

And again in " *Last words Napoleon and Wellington*", the theme of the poem is duty and service :

<sup>39</sup>"Not stirring words, nor gallant deeds alone,  
 Plain patient work fulfilled that length of life.  
 Duty, not glory - service, not a throne, inspired  
 his effort, set for him the strife".

"*Qui Laborat, Qrat*" also stresses the need for good and useful service to the community.

Clough tried to come out of the swirling current of pessimism and uncertainty as can be noticed in his self-comforting and hope inspiring poem "*Say Not the Struggle Nought Availath*" but he could not be successful in his attempt. In his two poems *Epi-straussiumn* and *Easterday* his belief in higher criticism has been discussed in *Eastert day*. <sup>40</sup>"The pessimism of the first part is often cited as proof of Clough's over whelming grief at the loss of all his orthodox beliefs and as evidence of the doubt that critics claim over-whelmed him for the rest of his life.....Part I is Clough's statement that 'the whole origin of Christianity is lost in obscurity. Part II is his statement of acceptance of the symbolic truths of christianity."

*Duty* - that's to say *complying* expresses poet's repressed emotion and outraged sensibility. To *the Great Metropolis*, *In the Great Hetropolis*, and *O Quimo* he portrays the conflict between the true realities and false attribute of modern life.

Clough's stress to serve the human being has been carried into his last, unfinished, long episodic poem. *Mari Magno* is a tale dealing with the practical problems connected with love and marriage. There are five story tellers going to New England and Canada. They decided to kill their time by telling tales about love and marriage.

First story is told by the lawyer. It's the story about a student who is interested in becoming a Don and is least bothered about his study. His married cousin advises him to drop that ideas and take part into the activities of life. This tale gives stress to connect the religion with the practical life.

Second tale *The clergyman*; first tale describes a youngman's hesitation before committing himself to marriage.

*The Lawyer's second tale* is about human suffering and tears. The theme of this poem resembles to *The Bothie*.

It tells about those who are dissatisfied with the world, *My tale* praises country's simplicity at the expense of urban sophistication.

Thus one can see that his short poems and long work highlight his ideas on God, Christianity and duty. His religion is closely connected with his social ideas and according to him a poet should be moral and his work should reflect the real life. Also, his work has historical significance as it gives information about the social, political and religious conditions of his age.

## REFERENCES

1. Evelyn Barish Green Berger, "The Battle By Night,  
Arthur Hugh Clough, The growth of a poet's mind,  
Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts,  
1970, p. 173.
2. Ed. A.L.P. Norrington, "The Bothie of Tober-na-  
Vuolich', The poems of Arthur Hugh Clough, London.  
Oxford University press, New York Toronto, 1968, p.  
170.
3. Ibid. p. 150.
4. Ibid. p. 170.
5. David Williams, Too Quick Despairer. The life and  
work of Arthur Hugh Clough, Rupert Hart - Davis  
LONDON, 1969, p. 76.
6. Ed. A.L.P. Norrington, The poems of Arthur Hugh  
Clough, op. cit., p. 151.
7. Evelyn Barish Green Berger, "The Battle By Night,  
op.cit., p. 174.
8. Crompton & Rickette, "The pessimistic note in  
Victorian poetry', A History of English literature,  
London, Nelson, 1957, p. 464.



9. A.L.P. Narrington, The poems of Arthur Hugh Clough,  
op. cit. p. 177.
10. Ibid, p. 201.
11. W.Y. Seller, From a review in North British, November  
1862.
12. A.L.P. Norrington, The poems of Arthur Hugh Clough  
op.cit., p. 179.
13. Ibid. p. 190.
14. Ibid, p. 192.
15. Ibid. p. 187.
16. Ibid. p. 181.
17. Ibid. p. 184.
18. W.Y. Seller, op. cit.
19. Charles Whibley. 'Introduction', Poem of A.H. Clough,  
Mac Millan & Co Limited, p. xxxii.
20. A.L.P. Norrington, op.cit., p. 214.
21. Ibid. p. 218
22. Ibid. p. 219.
23. Ibid., p. 219.
24. Michael Timko, 'Clough's Thought', Innocent Victorian,  
The satiric poetry of A.H. Clough, Ohio press, 1966, p.  
151.

25. Green Berger, The growth of a poet's mind, op. cit. p. 174.
26. Ibid p. 177.
27. Hugh Walker, 'The Turn of the century: New influences, The Literature of the Victorian era, Cambridge: university press, 1913. p. 462.
28. Michael Timko, Innocent victorian, op. cit, p. 156.
29. Ibid. pp. 166-67.
30. A.L.P. Narrington, Poems of Arthur Hugh Clough, op. cit. p. 276.
31. Green Berger, The growth of a poet's mind, op. cit. p. 172.
32. A.L.P. Narrington, Poems of Arthur Hugh Clough, op. cit., p. 289.
33. Michael Timko, Innocent victorian, op. cit. p. 167.
34. David William, Too Quick Despairer, the life and work of Arthur Hugh Clough, op.cit., pp. 100-101.
35. Charles Whibley, Poems of A.H. Clough, op. cit. p. XXIII.
36. Ed. A.L.P. Norrington, Poems of Arthur Hugh Clough, pp. 60-61.

37. Michael Tinko, Innocent victorian, op.cit., pp. 53-54.
38. Ed. A.L.P. Norrington, Poems of A.H. Clough, op.cit., p. 63.
39. Ibid. p. 94.
40. Michael Timko, Innocent victorian, op. cit, pp. 48-49.

***Chapter - III***

**PESSIMISM IN THE POETRY OF  
JAMES THOMSON**

James Thomson is greatly admired for his single poem, *The City of Dreadful Night*, expressing his innermost thoughts and feelings. It's the poet's analysis of his own mind and heart. This poem is charged with utter pessimism and hopelessness which was the expression of a mind naturally prone to gloom and melancholy. The poet's miserable life dragged him into the world of despair which formed the subjects of his writing. So to understand Thomson's writing, it is necessary to visualise painful experiences of his life reflected in his works. James Thomson was born at Port Glasgow in 1834. He spent his childhood in poverty due to the sudden breakdown in his father's health. The incident brought the family into financial crisis and forced them to seek better fortune in London. His mother died when he was a small boy. In spite of these circumstances, he got sufficient education and became an army school master. The period he spent in the school was the happiest one in Thomson's life. Now he fell in love with Matilda Weller and her premature death accentuated his tendency to melancholy. Dobell Betram writes about the incident <sup>1</sup>"That this was an overwhelming

blow to him, and that it affected his whole after-life, can hardly be doubted. All his hopes and all his plans for the future had been bound up with her; and with her death his chief aim in life had been destroyed. Henceforth his existence was that of one whose will was broken, and who cared not whither he wandered, since there was nowhere a Mecca or a promised land wherein he might hope to find rest and peace".

Here he has also made acquaintance with Charles Bradlaugh who was an atheist and his influence was deep upon Thomson and he helped Thomson to reach those negative conclusions towards which he was slowly moving. Once again Thomson was unfortunate when he was dismissed from the school following a disciplinary incident. He afterwards became a solicitor's clerk, then secretary of a gold and silver mine company, a war correspondent in Spain and finally he turned towards Bradlaugh who was running a magazine 'National Reformer', and almost all his famous poems were published in this magazine. His early works did not get so much acceptance as *The City of Dreadful Night* got. This poem attracted many critics of that time. Besides this, his work includes *Vane's story*, *Weddah*

and *Om-el-Bonain The Doom of a City, Insomnia, To Our Ladies of Death* and other poems.

*The City of Dreadful Night* appeared in 1874 and after one year of its publication Thomson's quarrel with Bradlaugh ended this long friendship. The quarrel was disastrous to Thomson and then he wrote only a few lyrics before his death. His later days darkened by poverty and ill-health, largely due to insomnia and intemperate habits, were spent in London. Finally, an atheist, depressive and alcoholic Thomson died at University college hospital, under distressing circumstances in June 1882.

This melancholic story is sufficiently reflected in his works. His most depressing poem *The City of Dreadful Night* expresses his own feelings and experience. It is the product of that time when he was wandering into the world of despair after the death of Matilda Weller. <sup>2</sup>"*The City of Dreadful Night* (1874) was Thomson's heart-to-heart communication of a secret to his suffering brethren. He was no sobber, and joined his vision of meloncholy (inspired by Durer) to an honestly intellectual pessimistic philosophy, with acknowledgements to his friend Charles Bradlaugh, and to Shalley, Heine, Leopardi and Schopenhauer. Fits of

melancholy and inebriety troubled him more deeply in later life". The whole poem is saturated with atheistic despair and Thomson offers a gloomy interpretation of the human condition, juxtaposed with dark description of the city, London and night. Structured with alternating meditative and episodic sections, London becomes synonymous with the loneliness and despondency of life as Thomson sees it.

The opening section of the poem describes the city and its location. It is the account of the journey of that narrator who travels through the city over the space of one night. The story is communicated through the figure of the first person narrator who participates in the dreamlike scenes of the even number episodes, and then makes comment in the odd number episodes. Also, there a proem which tells the purpose of this work. The proem and eleven odd numbered cantos supply the description and philosophy that makes sense of those symbolic adventures described by the narrator.

The city described by the narrator is a labyrinth surrounded by the sea and mountain and there is no escape except by cessation of consciousness in death. Before the description of the city in section I, poet tells that



he is writing for those who share his feelings while suffering loneliness and despair :

3"I suffer mute and lonely, yet another  
uplifts his voice to let me know a  
brother Travels the same wild  
paths though out of sight"

O sad Fraternity, do I unfold  
Your dolorous mysteries shrouded from of  
yore'.

Nay, be assured; no secret can be told  
To any who divined it not before".

The poet makes it clear in the proem that he is going to discuss something serious. He wants to share his personal suffering and discovery of alienation which he experienced in his life. 4"But instead of proffering any consolation so crude as hope or even resignation, *The city* attempts to alleviate suffering through the presentation of a truth that should make each man's life more his own, and less vulnerable to the indifferent cruelties of existence".

The poet's personal experience make him clear that man wanders through a Biblical desert which has no promised land and he is spiritually alone in the universe and to share this discovery he writes '*The City*'. His journey is a voyage of discovery consisting of a series of symbolic adventures which illustrate the demonic isolation of human

existence in the city.

*The city, narrator visits, is the city of death and darkness. It seems that the sun never visited this city. There is silence everywhere and it looks ruinous but it is not ruinous. People who belong to this city, appear to be deaf and blind: As poet describes them in section I.*

<sup>5</sup>"So there; warm faces that look deaf and blind  
Like tragic masks of stone. With weary treads,  
Each wrapt in his own doom, they wander, wander,  
Or sit foredone and desolately pender  
Through sleepless hours with heavy droopind  
head".

This city is a land of darkness where no light could reach and the night of this city seems 'termless hell'. Although there is silence in the city, no one is sleeping. All of are awake. This waking means that they are conscious and thus feeling pain but are helpless. They have no hope of freedom.

<sup>6</sup>"They leave all hope behind who enter:  
One certitude while same they cannot leave,  
One anodyne for torture and despair".

Thus in this section the poet discovers that being a conscious man one has to suffer and there is no escape from this suffering. This pain and despair is must for those who are living in this world with consciousness. In the next section the narrator is telling about the place of the city

where Faith, Hope and Love have died. This experience is communicated by the narrator who is following the reader's shadow. First place, towards which shadow indicates, is where 'Faith died', poised by the channel air. Then he reaches another site and indicates :

7"He gazed, and muttered with a hard despair,  
Here love died, stabbed by its own worshipped  
pair".

and then he marched towards the street where a house was built, the shadow whispered with a cold despair that here Hope died. 8"Frustrated and disappointed by "this drear pilgrimage to ruined shrines (1.28)", the narrator asks how life can continue in this condition. The shade compares his own existence to a clock without face or hands : life goes on, purposeless, until it runs down. Then the ghostly figure returns to his three-stop round, circling as the clockworks do, a walking symbol of a symbol". The next section tells about the poet's effort to come out from the land of grief but he finds helpless in this effort so he gives up all hope. This theme is presented through narrator when he is telling about his struggle to come out from the city and at last he searches a way.

<sup>9</sup>"And soon the eye a strange new vision learns". But this way is not clear because the city of night is so dark and dense that no effort will be successful :

<sup>10</sup>"Where Death-in-life is the eternal king,  
Crushed impotent beneath this reign of terror,  
Dazed with mysteries of woe and error,  
The soul is too outworn for wondering".

The narrator moves forward where Thomson symbolizes the threat of mechanism and its effect upon human life. Science is challenging the religion, and machine is replacing human beings. The poet expresses his fear in these lines :

<sup>11</sup>"The hoarse and heavy and carnivorous breath  
Was hot upon me from deep jaws of death;  
Sharp claws, swift talens, fleshless fingers cold  
plucked at me from the bushes, tried to hold".

<sup>12</sup>"Here Mechanical 'clanking' is reinforced by 'fleshless' and 'cold', yet this lifeless horror is juxtaposed with the hot immediacy of carnivorous desire. Life is evoked, but unnatural life, the city is populated by just such life". And in such circumstances there is no hope as the life has lost all its charm so there is no fear also. <sup>13</sup>"But as soon as he sees the specter of the dead woman he had loved, he says, "I was twain, Two selves distinct that cannot join again (IV 71=72). The ghost embraces the part of him that had died with her and both are swept away forever on the tide of an

indifferent sea. Despite his original refrain. "No hope could have no fear", the traveller has given way to the false hope of love, thus exposing himself to the bereavement which has shattered his identity. The weakness of having hope, Thomson implies lead to an irrecoverable loss of self".

This painful journey in the city of gloom is continued, it is the picture of the real city of Britain which is presented by Thomson. The life of this city has characteristics of the nineteenth-century industrial city and the poet is the person who is living in that city and he expresses his feeling in this poem.

The geographical condition of the city also does not provide a way of escape to the narrator as it is surrounded by every side, so the escape seems hopeless, but if he gets a chance by luck then also he can't escape as he has wife and babies and being a conscious man he loves them more than death or happy life, so he will have to bear this pain.

In section VI the narrator overhears the talk of two phantoms, in which one is telling the other about his effort to get rid of this city even he prefers hell to this city, but does not succeeded as he is not allowed to enter the hell because he is the resident of this city:

<sup>14</sup>"Leave hope behind, all ye who enter here"  
 And would have passed in, gratified to gain  
 That positive eternity of pain  
 Instead of this insufferable inane".

So he returns with this consolation that it has been written in destiny to live in this city 'shunt out alike from heaven and earth and Hell'. But his companion suggests him to share the feeling and to search again a way with hope because being a conscious man, no one should stop thinking and try to find out a way to escape without wasting time.

In the next section, the narrator discovers the truth that all men are sharing the same feeling of pain though they have different status. The city is a place of horror where phantoms are more comfortable than men.

<sup>15</sup>"I have seen phantoms there that were as a man  
 And men that were as phantoms flit and ram.  
 Marked shapes that were not living to my ken  
 caught breathings acrid as with Dead Sea foam:  
 The city rests for man so weird and awful  
 That his intrusion there might seem unlawful,  
 And phantoms there may have their proper home".

This journey with symbolic adventures is going on and the narrator reaches the river side where a man is complaining of the fate which is responsible for his painful life :

<sup>16</sup>"Who is most wretched in this dolorous place ?  
 I think myself : yet I would rather be  
 My miserable self than He, than He  
 who formed such creatures to His own disgrace".

He also blames God who is the creator of human kind and  
such creation is against His dignity. But his companion says  
 that it is the mechanical function of the universe and there  
 is no mind behind such life :

<sup>17</sup>"The world rolls round for ever like a mill;  
 It grinds out death and life and good and ill;  
 It has no purpose, heart or mind or will".

In this city, the human condition is declining. There is no  
 purpose to live and all things depend on fate. Everyone is  
 performing his duties assigned by his fate. The sign of  
 livelihood as joy, peace and hope has been lost due to the  
 curse of the city.

In the next section, the narrator enters into a silent  
 mansion where there is no sign of life. He wanders from  
 room to room and hall to hall and found the portrait of a  
 young woman 'held a shrine, around which tapers burned',  
 in every room. He searches more and finally reaches a room  
 where the lady of shrine lies in funeral pose and a young  
man kneels beside the bed and he seems to pray to her  
 even after death, as he used to pray in her life. The narrator

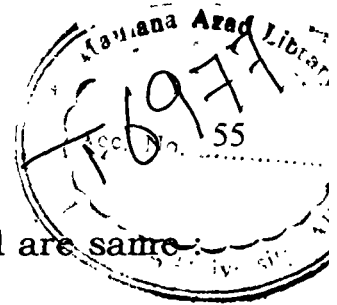
is very much impressed to see this and he also kneels beside her and wishes to stay here till she wakes but he feels that he is turning into stone by shock as someone tells him that she will never wake because she is dead.

<sup>18</sup>"Most beautiful were Death to end my grief,  
Most hateful to destroy the sight of thee,  
Dear vision better than all death or life".

and the narrator come out from the palace with grief. In this section, the poet recalls the death of his beloved. This incident was unbearable for the poet : he never comes out from this shock throughout his life and this is reflected in this poem also. So this section is the outcome of the personal experience which was a turning point in his life.

In section XI, the poet is surprised on the patience of the citizens of this city who are now habitual to live in this tomb even though by now they lost all hopes of freedom. They have strength and wisdom to overcome the miseries of life but accept this painful life as a verdict of fate. In this city, everyone is facing same problems inspite of enjoying variety of status and poet disagrees with this indifference towards tackling the problems. He says that these people are making paths of their ruins and 'To cheat itself refusing to be hold; and in the eyes of poet





irrespective of having or not having power, all are same.

<sup>19</sup>"Yet these and those are brothers,  
The saddest and the weariest men on earth".

The modern man's problem of alienation has been discussed by the poet in the next section. The narrator tries to find out a way for all those sufferers who are facing same problem but due to lack of communication they are not aware of each other's problems, so the narrator suggests a plan of procession, to bring together all isolated units. In this long procession every citizen will participate and it will end near the cathedral. <sup>20</sup>"Yet as Thomson's inverted procession of isolation toward a cathedral of atheism demonstrates, the more men realize their separation, the more they can see in each other a common despair or, worse, the consequences of their own seemingly isolated actions. Thomson's procession serves an authentic purpose finally, beneath its silent, dissociative demeanor and godless destination, for it requires total participation and a renunciation of individual identity for the common acceptance of 'this real night'". But very soon he realizes that this is his dream only and his efforts are useless so he accepts the painful reality and enters into the cathedral with others :

<sup>21</sup>"From desperate fighting with a little band  
 Against the powerful tyrants of our land  
 To free our brethren in their own despite  
 I wake from daydreams to this real night".

In this sunless city, time is passing slowly. All men are suffering with consciousness but sometime pray secretly to become unconscious so that they can pass time without pain. The hours in this city are intolerable and nights are full of pain. In this situation they wish to have death which will give them relief.

<sup>22</sup>"We yearn for speedy death in full fruitions  
 Dateless oblivion and divine repose".

In section XIV, the narrator reaches a place where all men are gathered and patiently waiting for the event when the preacher will arrange for their freedom. They hear a sad voice of preacher who addresses the crowd in these words :

<sup>23</sup>"O Meloncholy Brothers, dark, dark, dark  
 O battling in black floods without an arc  
 O spectral wanderers of unholy Night!"

He confirms it in his speech that he is sharing their pain, and to provide them freedom from this suffering, he tries to search a way but he is not successful in his effort and at last he reaches the conclusion :

<sup>24</sup>"There is no God; no Friend with names divine"

so all are free to end their life as they wish because there will be no reward of this suffering after death and this life is a curse and the grave is the best place in this city, so the death is best way for them. But this declaration is for the time being and again the poet insists them to pass this life with patience as <sup>25</sup>"all sustenance lives and struggles ever more" and this is the Necessity which have forced all for this life and if they will bear all these pains with consciousness only for some years then will get relief forever but if they are unable to do so then free to end their lives :

<sup>26</sup>"End it when you will".

In this section the poet wants to tell them that there is no solution of their pain in religion, so they should rely upon their way of thinking and try to find out a way themselves. *No preacher or religious leader is able to solve their problems so they should take decisions according to their self consciousness.*

<sup>27</sup>"The fifteenth and shortest section of the poem celebrates the congregation's new found self awareness and freedom to act. In a ritual expression of collective suffering, it recognizes that only human activity and belief can create value and meaning in an impersonal universe".

In next section, the narrator hears a voice of man who is the member of congregation. The man is complaining that in all eternity he has got the chance to pass his life with wife and babies. This chance was never offered to him and he wishes to enjoy this opportunity but this life is so painful and worse that it has become curse. Hence, he does not accept the idea of suicide offered by the preacher. He discovers that :

28"Our life's a cheat, our death a black abyss;  
Hush and be mute envisaging despair".

In the next section, the poet is talking about all those things which are doing their jobs without any objection or resistance as the moon does its duty through the endless nights and stars also glitter. They are performing their jobs because they have no mind or heart, they are only puppets. But

29"if we could near them with the flight unflown  
We should but find them worlds as sad as this.  
Or suns all self consuming like our own  
Enrined byplanet worlds as much amiss:  
They wax and wane through fusion and confusion;  
The spheres eternal are a grand illusion,  
The empyrean is a void abyss".

The quest is going on. The mental disorder of the residence of this city has been described by the poet. 30"The overall

effect of Thomson's section XVIII is of pervasive melancholy, a wasted life searching for an impossible ideal, no more than escape 'Beyond the reach of man-evolving Poem' which is never achieved". A man's wish to reunite his present with past, so that he could get back his innocence, is an escape from reality :

<sup>31</sup>"For this is law, if law there is in fate:  
What never has been, yet may have its when;  
The thing which has been never is again".

The next section insists on being experienced through suffering. 'The River of Suicides' is the Thomson's best expression about his philosophy of life. He says that suicide is not the solution of this suffering and if one gains maturity at the cost of this painful night then this will be a great success. This time is precious which one can utilise in gaining self-knowledge and after the death he will sleep forever.

<sup>32</sup>"What matters one brief night of dressy Rain?  
When after it the weary eyelids fall  
You the weary eyes and wasted brain;  
And all sad scenes and thoughts and feeling vanish  
In that sweet sleep no power can ever banish,  
That one best sleep which never wakes again".

The most striking image in the city is that of an armed angel's statue crumbling before an inscrutable

sphinx. In the poem, the weary and depressed narrator sits at the base of a pillar across a great cathedral. The narrator is thinking about these two contrasting shapes, suddenly he awakens by the noise and sees.

<sup>33</sup>"The angle's wings had fallen, stone on stone,  
And lay there shattered: hence the sudden sound:  
*A warrior leaving on his sword alone*  
Now watched the sphinx with that regard profound.

This defeat of Angel who is associated with religion confirms that now there is no place of religion in human life and the only way for existence in this city is, to change the human life according to science. Religion is not only stone which can give them protection.

The last stanza which has been appreciated by almost all the critics of that time is the 'Meloncolia' Passage. The last six stanzas of this passage are considered as 'the highwater mark of pessimism' by 'The London Quarterly Review', which disliked the poem. The end of the narrator's quest is the statue of Melancolia representing the only way to endure a universe which, though indifferent, nonetheless binds existence with the chains of time. The Melancolia indicates Thomson's development towards accepting the domanic world as the ultimate reality of existence. She is

surrounded by the scientific and geographical instruments by which she measured the time and space of human life and the result is despair.

<sup>34</sup>"Unvanquished in defeat and desolation,  
Undawnted in the hopeless conflagration  
Of the day setting on her baffled prime".

The final discovery which Meloncolia makes is a cosmic nihilism. She is a bronze statue and cannot move, but she has eternal consciousness as she sits with the tools of action around her. In the last lines the poet reveals his intention by describing the position of Melancolia.

<sup>35</sup>"Her subjects often gaze upto her there:  
The strong to drink new strength of iron endurance,  
The weak new terrors: all renewed assurance  
And confirmation of the old despair".

Thus in the end, she suggests to become time conscious in the real life as there is nothing after death.

<sup>36</sup>"The narrator in the city, then is searching for a way to come to turn with the meaninglessness of a universe ruled by blind Necessity. His journey gradually uncovers the hidden connections between the isolated members of his suffering fraternity, eventually showing that freedom and comfort can be achieved through a shared stoic confrontation of the city". Thomson's city has been

compared with the Eliot", *The Waste Land*. Both poets have written about London. Before writing *The Wasteland*, Eliot had read Thomson and his influence could be seen in his poem. The city of Thomson is hopeless and Eliot's, 'The Wasteland' also gives this impression as Thomson says <sup>37</sup>"They leave all hope behind who enter there" and Eliot confirms this in *Wasteland* "Leave hope behind all ye who enter there". The fear of inanity which is found in Thomson's poetry is also expressed by Eliot. Both poets are searching for peace and joy in a desert. But the one big difference in both poet's city is that Thomson's city is without God and Eliot's. 'The Wasteland' is seeing towards God for peace. So the similarity indicates that Thomson made impact upon Eliot's mind and both poets were suffering from same feeling and despair for which that age was responsible in which they were living. But the dark pessimism of 'The city' could not be compared to any other work of the age. It is absolutely without hope, and without God in the world. <sup>38</sup>"What make this work remarkable among victorian poems about the city is that it offers a solution to the familiar catalogue of urban complaints and fears, a way of dealing and living with the urban despair to which it at first appears to succumb".



Thomson's another poem *The Doom of a City* which is his first poetic masterpiece was written at that time when he was passing through a great spiritual struggle. <sup>39</sup>"His theme belongs distinctly to his earlier period; the recognition of a Providence has not been rejected and even a faith in human amelioration is expressed". The poem is about the voyage of the poet to a city of stone people. In the first part of the poem he tells about the atmosphere of the city which create a terror upon his mind. He gives the picture of the city.

<sup>40</sup>"That mighty city through the breathless air  
Thrilled forth no pulse of sound, no faintest hint  
Of congregated life in street and square;  
Be calmed beyond all calm those gallies lay,  
As still and lifeless as their shadows there".

The poet is horrified to see this city where no one is alive. He finds himself helpless and alone in that mysterious city. <sup>41</sup>"In the second part, there is a description of this city, where all life has turned to stone - an allegory of the stony insensibility of the human heart when numbed by destiny and despair". He visits through the city and tells about it :

<sup>42</sup>"What found I? - Dead stone sentinels stony-eyed.  
Erect, steel, sworded, brass-defended all,  
Guarding the sombre gateway deep and wide  
Hewn like a cavern through the mighty wall;

Stone statues all throughout the streets and  
 squares,  
 Grouped as in social converse or alone;  
 Dim stony merchants holding forth rich wares  
 To catch the choice of purchasers of stone".

The expressions and positions of these statues give the idea that they were not prepared for their doom and life was therefore going on normally in the city. They were busy in their daily life's work. In one place, people were participating in congregation and clothed in rich array, suddenly all of them turned into stones. In another place, people were enjoying theatre and an actor was performing on the stage whose expressions reflect that it was tragic drama and he also turned into stone. Poet also describes the position of the King, the Queen and their company which were gathered in the palace, and after the doom they all turned into stone.

<sup>43</sup>"Gathered together, all awaited there  
 Such scenic storms as purify life's air;  
 Whose scathless lightening slimmer wildly grand,  
 Whose lofty thunders soo the sure peace more  
 bland;  
 And now, without a throb, without a breath.  
 They wait, all frozen into icydeath".

The poet is upset to see these statues. He wants to know the reason of this doom so he continues his visits and

comes to the statue of Melancolia which is capable of reading all theological mysteries. The poet tells about this statue :

<sup>44</sup>"He sits, the full length statue of a sage,  
Amid the busts of those every age  
Who handed on the torch of Wisdom, bright  
With growing splendour; thwart the billowy night  
Of shoreless ignorance Before him lies  
The roll which tellath on what mysteries  
He shed its lustre till they shone and clear;  
It race its period by the moonlight here".

He gets an answer to his question when he comes to know that the personage, who symbolizes the state of religious existence in the city, and all his fellow inhabitants were punished by God for the sins they had committed. Thus the male personage contains, in symbolic form, the implications of being reprobate to God. The inhabitants being 'Frozen into a nightmare', ghastly death' implies lack of an after life, the fear of ultimate nothingness. The poet is depressed because of this situation. He says :

<sup>45</sup>"It is too horrible: - alone, alone,  
I make mad delliance with the empty flesh;  
Whose form is whole, whose ghastly bloom is fresh;  
And by my side, that hater of the soul -  
The grimming, the accursed skeleton ?

To see this condition of human beings he begins to lose

faith in God. He starts believing that man wanders through a Biblical desert with no promised land. <sup>46</sup>"The climax of the poem, *The Judgment*, comes in the third section of the poem, where the narrator overhears God's Doom on the city. In this judgment, which has somehow the hall-marks of early inflicted Scotch Presbyterianism about it, and whose manner is constantly reminiscent of Shelley and De Quincey, the wicked statues crash to dust, and the good become free spirits". This destructive judgment is the message of ruin for the inhabitants of this city. They cry and make plea to God for forgiveness.

<sup>47</sup>"Abominable Fate,  
We hurl thee back thy hate !  
The poison and the wine -  
Our sins and souls are thine !  
Ah! pangs of utter death  
Stifle our breath  
Hear us, we plead; hear us; oh wait".

But their request has not been accepted and they are crushed to dust. This judgment confirms poet's fear of ultimate nothingness which becomes undeniable reality in *The City*. This poem belongs to Thomson's earlier period when the poet was not an atheist but was progressing towards it. In the poem, one finds some indications of faith in religion till this period as the poet celebrates the freedom

of spirits by a triumph song.

<sup>48</sup>"The fourth part, 'The Return', is calmer and more diadactic in tone. Thomson here states his creed of life vaguely and uncertainly, but not without force and art". In the last section the narrator returns home in his boat with a warning to his own city.

<sup>49</sup>"If ye do not all repent, and cleanse each one  
herheart  
From the foulness circling with its blood to poison  
every part.  
Woe to thy pampered rich in their arrogant  
selfishness;  
Woe to thy brutalike poor who feel but their bread  
distress.

.....

The final Doom evolveth, burdened with woe on woe  
Sure as the justice of God while yet his patience  
slow;  
For the earth is pervaded wholly, through densest  
stone and clod.  
With the burning fire of the law of the Truth of the  
Living God;  
Consuming the falsehood, the evil, the pride, the  
lust, the shame,  
With ever burning unrelenting irresistible flame  
Until all save the purest spirit, eternal, of truth and  
love.  
Be altogether consumed away, beneath as well as  
above".

In this poem, the poet stresses on the necessity of the organisation of the institutions belonging to human kind. He wants to solve all the problems causing social and religious evils and he warns people that if they will not follow the right path, they will be punished by God like the people of the stone city.

Another pessimistic poem which also belongs to Thomson's earlier period is *Vane's Story*. In this poem, the poet idealised the image of his dead beloved Matilda. The death of this girl was an unforgettable sorrow for Thomson and his grief has been expressed in most of his poems, specially in "vane's story".<sup>50</sup> "Vane's Story (1864), a more uneven work, has definitely autobiographical elements. The speaker, after a brief prologue in skeltonics, narrates how he encounters the vision of his dead beloved. They speak together, he of his atheism and she of her simple, self-consoling faith". This poem reveals the poet's spiritual struggle. His faith in God is now fading and he blames God for the suffering of human being. He says :

<sup>51</sup>"He cursed  
The work the thought so good at first;  
And surely Earth and Heaven evince  
That the has done but little since".

He complains that God has made this world within six days and now he is taking eternal rest but

<sup>52</sup>"I have worked life after life  
Of sorrow, sufference and strife".

The struggle of present life makes the poet feel tired. He feels alone and regards the world as a scene of black and immitigable despair. He describes his life as :

<sup>53</sup>"Meanwhile I passively endure  
The wounds bequeathed by so much strife  
The hopelessness of present life.  
And this is much; what further can  
Be looked for from a wreck of man  
I bear in silence and alone  
What maddened me at first, I own".

This painful description causes sorrow to his beloved but she does not agree with his complaint that God is unknown from our suffering. She gives many arguments to restore his faith in God. But she does not succeed in her aim as the poet mocks at those customs and prayers which have been performed by saints. He also makes fun of the religious people who pray throughout their lives only to get entry into Heaven. They perform all these acts for their comfort in the next life and are not genuine. So the poet mocks at all those people who do it for *mockery*.

<sup>54</sup>"Their earnest prayers were coward cries,  
 Their holy doctrines blasphemies;  
 Their faith, hope, love, no more, no less,  
 Then sublimated selfishness.

In this poem there are autobiographical elements. The poet recalls his past life when he was going through the painful phase of his life. He tells his beloved about that life.

<sup>55</sup>"I half remember, years ago,  
 Fits of despair that moddened woe,  
 Erantic remorse, intense self-scorn,  
 And yearnings harder to be borne,  
 of utter loneliness portion.

<sup>56</sup>"The terror with which he recognizes the necessity of accepting this life is expressed in lines reminiscent of Blake:

As well a thorn might pray to be  
 Transformed into an alive tree;  
 As well a weevil might determine  
 To grow a former hating vermin".

Despite his belief in God, he is not satisfied with his life and he blames God for this suffering. After a discussion with his beloved, <sup>57</sup>"the poem changes with the recital of Heine's *Kh bin die prinzessin Ilse*. The lady ceases to be a vision gains definite human qualities, and goes off with the speaker to a working men's ball. Here they meet Brown and dones with their rough, enthusiastic pleasure making, and



so Vane's dream ends". This poem tells about the life of the poet which was 'a long defeat' according to his own version. He never comes out of the grief of his beloved's death and here he idealises her image. The isolation of present life is the cause of melancholy which is poisoning him.

<sup>58</sup>"The stream fell stagnant, and was soon  
A bloated marsh, a pest-lagoon:  
The sweet flowers died, the noble trees  
Turned black and gaunt anatomies  
The birds all left the saddened air  
To seek some other home as fair".

Despite the defect of poetic unity, the poem is a large work in the field of pessimism. It tells about the time of the poet when he was torn between faith and doubt, and he frankly describe his mental condition and fits of despair. Thomson's another pessimistic poem *To Our Ladies of Death* also deals with the pain and suffering of the poet's life. In the first stanza of this poem the poet expresses his wish to die.

<sup>59</sup>"Weary of erring in this desert life,  
Weary of hoping hopes for ever vain,  
Weary of struggling in all-sterile strife,  
Weary of thought which maketh nothing plain,  
I close my eyes and calm my painting breath,  
And pray to Thee, O ever-quite Death!  
To come and seethe away my bitter pain".

In this poem which is full declaration of pessimism the poet

is describing three ladies. The first is 'the Lady of Beatitudes, who represents individual and conscious immortality', the poet calls her for help and describes her like this

<sup>60</sup>"Twin heavens uplifted to the heavens, thine eyes  
Are solemn with unutterable thought  
And love and aspiration; yet there dies  
Within their light eternal sadness, wrought  
By hope deferred and baffled tenderness:  
Of all the souls whom thou dost love and bless,  
How few reverse and love thee as they ought.

This lady is unable to provide him peace so he calls another Lady of Annihilation, <sup>61</sup>"who represents eternal death, in turn appears before the poet but fails to solace him. Last comes the lady of oblivion, the spirit of peaceful fusion into the world spirit". The poet requests her for eternal rest.

<sup>62</sup>"O Sweetest Sister, and sole patron saint  
Of all the humble cremites who flee  
From out life's crowded tumult, stunned and faint.  
To seek a stern and lone tranquility  
In Libyan wastes of time: my hopeless life  
With fanished yearning craveth rest from strife  
Therefore, thou Restful One, I call on thee".

The poet is tired of this painful life. Now he wants to get rid of this life where there is only struggle. So he prays for death which is the only way of rest and the poem ends with the wish for death

<sup>63</sup>"Weary of living isolated life  
 Weary of hoping hopes forever vain  
 Weary of struggling in all sterile strife,  
 Weary of thought which maketh nothing plain  
 I close my eyes and hush my painting breath,  
 And yearn for thee, divinely tranquil death,  
 To come and soothe away my bitter pain".

One more poem which tells about the poet's early days is *Insomnia*. This poem is the experience of the poet when he walked on the streets of London at night due to insomnia.

<sup>64</sup>"Insomnia, shorter and less complex, sounds perhaps even deeper abysses of woe and suffering, and reveals one of the causes which produced it. For many years Thomson was a victim of sleeplessness, so this poem has the dreadful reality of personal experience". He tells about those nights which he passes without sleep :

<sup>65</sup>"But I with infinite weariness outwarn  
 Hoggard with endless nights unblessed by sleep  
 Ravaged by thoughts unutterably forlorn  
 plunged in despairs unfathomably deep".

These nights seem endless to him and the thought of many events is the cause of insomnia. He tried to get rid of these painful thoughts but the burden of this tortured life impelled the poet, night after night, to roam about the streets of London. Thomson's despair and gloom, on the death of his beloved is expressed again in *Mater*

*Tenebrarum.* <sup>66</sup>"He cries out in the night at the thought that perhaps his love is dead in soul as well as in :

In the endless nights, from my bed, where  
 sleepless in frenzy I lie,  
 I cleave through the crushing gloom with a  
 bitter and deadly cry :  
 Oh ! where have they taken my Love from  
 our Ealen of bliss on this earth,  
 Which now is a frozen waste of sepulchral  
 and horrible dearth?  
 Have they killed her indeed? is her soul as  
 her body, which long  
 Has mouldered away in the dust where the  
 foul warms throng?  
 O er what abhorrent Lethes, to what  
 remotest ster,  
 Is she rapt away from my pursuit thou'  
 cycles and systems par?  
 She is dead, *she is utterly dead: for her life*  
 would hear and speed  
 To the wild imploring cry of my heart that  
 cries in its dreadful need".

He loses all hope and in this hopeless condition he wants to die.

Thomson's one more long poem *Weddah and Om-el-Bonain*, not pessimistic, but is sad. It is the story of two lovers. The Juliet of the tale, Om-el Bonain, in order to save her country, has wedded Walid without love. Her Romeo, Weddah who is learning that he must relinquish his love, is

brought very close to death.

67" This truth was a potent poison-drought,  
Fire in the entails, wild fire in the brain,  
Which kindled savage strength in him who quaffed  
And did not die of its first maddening pain  
It struck him like the mere malignant shaft  
which stings a warrior into sense again,  
Who lay bonumbed with wounds, and would have  
died  
Unroused: the fresh wound makes him crawl and  
hide.

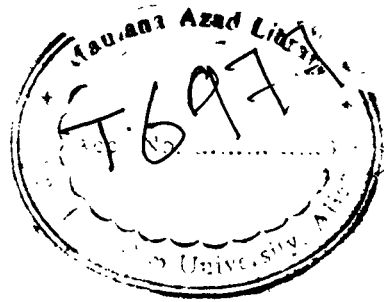
He wanders alone in the desert and visits her in disguise and has been caught by her husband and is buried alive. Umel-Bonain pines and dies and thus this story ends. This poem is a romantic tragedy. <sup>68</sup>"It has the same range of ambition as Keat's *Isabella*; decorative elements enter without corrupting the development, and the memory left from the poem lies not merely in incident but in a pictorial image of beauty's unfair struggle with power".

After analysing the pessimistic poems of Thomson, it has been found that his personal experiences are the subject of his writing. His sensitive nature did not allow him to escape from the struggle of life by engaging the social life. He was unable to free himself from those past griefs which became a life-long pain for him and his poems are the reflection of that time.

## REFERENCES

1. Betram Dobell, The Laureate of Pessimism, London, 1910, pp. 6-7.
2. Sherard Wines, A Hundred Years of English Literature, Duckworth, London, p. 156.
3. James Thomson, The James Thomson poetry Works, <http://vasthead.com>
4. William Sharpe, 'Learning to Read the City', Victorian Poetry, West Virginia University, 1984, p. 68.
5. James Thomson, The James Thomson, Poetry Works, op.cit.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. William Sharpe, 'Learning to Read the City', op.cit., p. 71.
9. James Thomson, The James Thomson Poetry Works, op.cit.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Ian Campbell, 'And I Burn too', Thomson's City of Dreadful Night, Victorian Poetry, vol. 16, p. 130.

13. William Sharpe, 'Learning to Read the City', op.cit., p. 74.
14. James Thomson, The Poetry Works of James Thomson, op.cit.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid.
20. William Sharpe, 'Learning to Read the City', op.cit., p. 77.
21. James Thomson, The Poetry Works of James Thomson, op.cit.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid.
27. William Sharpe, 'Learning to Read the City', op.cit., p. 79.



28. James Thomson, The Poetry works of James Thomson,  
op.cit.
29. Ibid.
30. Ian Campbell, 'And I Burn too: Thomson's City of  
Dreadful Night', op.cit., p. 128.
31. James Thomson, The Poetry Works of James Thomson,  
op.cit.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid.
36. William Sharpe, 'Learning to Read the City', op.cit., p.  
80.
37. James Thomson, The Poetry Works of James Thomson.
38. William Sharpe, 'Learning to Read the City', op.cit., p.  
66.
39. Ifar Evans, Later 19th Century Poetry 1933, p. 156.
40. Betram Dobell (ed.) 'The Doom of a City', Poetical  
Works of James Thomson, London, 1895, p. 95.
41. Meeker James Edward, 'Study and Teachings', The  
Life and Poetry of James Thomson, Yale University  
Press, p. 31.



42. Betram Dobell (ed.), 'The Doom of a City', *op.cit.*, p. 102.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 107.
44. *Ibid.*, pp. 110-111.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 113.
46. Meeker James Edward, 'Study and Teachings', *op.cit.*, p. 33.
47. Betram Dobell (ed.), 'The Doom of a City', *op.cit.*, pp. 122-123.
48. Meeker James Edward, 'Study and Teaching', *op.cit.*, p. 34.
49. Betram Dobell (ed.) 'The Doom of a City', *op.cit.*, pp. 158-159.
50. Ifar Evan, *Later 19th Century Poetry*, *op.cit.*, p. 200.
51. Betram Dobell (ed.), 'Vane's Story', Vane's Story, Weddah and Om-el-Bonain and other poems, London 1880, Vol. II, p. 9.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
54. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

56. Ifor Evan, Later 19th Century Poetry, op.cit., p. 201.
57. Ibid., p. 200.
58. Betram Dobell (ed.), 'Vane's Story', op.cit., p. 46.
59. Betram Dobell (ed.), 'To Our Ladies of Death', op.cit., p. 59, London, 1895.
60. Ibid., p. 61.
61. Meeker, James Edward, 'Study and Teaching', op.cit., p. 54.
62. Betram Dobell (ed.), 'To Our Ladies of Death', op.cit., p. 65, 1895.
63. Ibid., p. 67.
64. Hugh Walker, 'Later Developments', The Literature of the victorian era, 1910, p. 591.
65. Betram Dobell (ed.), 'Insomnia', op.cit., 1895, p. 68.
66. Meeker James Edward, 'Study and Teachings', op.cit., pp. 44-45.
67. Betram Dobell (ed.), 'Weddah and Om-el-Bonain', London 1880, op.cit., p. 79.
68. Ifor Evans, Later 19th Century Poetry, op.cit., p. 99.

***Chapter - IV***

**PESSIMISM IN THE POETRY OF  
EDWARD FITZGERALD**

The *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* is among the few masterpieces that has been translated into most languages including English, French, German, Italian, Russian, Chinese, Hindi, Arabic and Urdu. The most famous translation of *Rubaiyat* from Persian into English was undertaken in 1859 by Edward Fitzgerald. The stimulating influence of Cowell led him to take an interest in Persian poetry. The early years of Fitzgerald's life were spent in translating the works of Calderon, Aeschylus and Sophocles. He made no attempt at literal translation and added something to the original verse from his store of imagination. The difference between the translation of *Rubaiyat* and other works is that he exercised extreme freedom while translating Omar's *Rubaiyat* and transferring his original thoughts and images from their actual context to maintain his strength as an original.

The life history of Fitzgerald indicates the miseries he faced in his life. He was educated at Trinity college, Cambridge and was a great friend of Tennyson and Thackeray. From the childhood he saw a conflict between his parents because of economic differences. He was not satisfied with his married life.

<sup>1</sup>"The plain truth is that Fitzgerald was not the marrying kind; not two mortals could have been mere unsuited to each other. He was too ascetic in temperament, too eccentric in his habits, too settled in his bachelor ways ever to accomodate himself to such a loveless union. His wife was too precise, too respectable, too confirmed in her determination to reform her husband's manners and way of life". The result was the separation between them permanently. This tragic end of marriage left a deep influence upon sensitive Fitzgerald. Besides this, the death of friends and relatives was another factor behind his melancholic view of life. Thus all Fitzgerald's happiest moments were clouded and his life seemed very purposeless. <sup>2</sup>"Sometimes he dropped into a mood of pettish pessimism; and nothing better illustrates his aloofness from life than that his dislike of the new mannerism of talk and society, which he began to encounter should have seemed to him not matters of indifference, but food for the profoundest melancholy" and this temperament overshadowed the works of Fitzgerald.

He was very much concerned with the society's problems and wanted to solve them. He wanted to save those human values which were in danger of being ignored.

He expressed his deepest emotions as well as his often subversive ideas in an indirect way, by translating the works of others rather than by writing his own poetry. Fitzgerald's temperament and leisurely way of life fitted him to be the interpreter of Omar Khayyam who was a philosopher and teacher. Khayyam understood the meaning of not being in control of our lives and deaths, and found the limits of our freedom. He learnt what was important in life. And through his life, his teachings and his Rubaiyat conveyed that meaning. He came to know that death was an inevitable fate for anyone who was ever born. <sup>3</sup>"What Omar Khayyam said by way of anticipation seven centuries ago is the scepticism of a man who, after working through all the fields of science upon to him, finds himself disposed to weep despairingly over the unsatisfactory result of human knowledge". Fitzgerald found spiritual equality in Omar with himself and this is the reason that there is originality in Fitzgerald's translation and no one never feels that sense of loss which translation normally gives. <sup>4</sup>"Whatever liberties Fitzgerald may have taken with the original, scholars of persian are agreed that he has substantially reproduced the doctrine of Omar. This doctrine is a mixture of skepticism, fatalism and hedonism - this last being the most important. For though

life is short and death certain, we can still make the most of what life has to offer - the beauty of the world and its pleasures. The poet's advice is to live for the day and not bother about tomorrow - "To take the cash and let the credit go".

This poem appeared at the time when religious convention was aggressive and there was a sharp conflict between faith and reason. People were losing their faith for scientific convention and reconstruction was becoming inevitable. New scientific theories were challenging many religious beliefs. <sup>5</sup>"Its publicaiton in 1858 coincided with a strong anti-devotional movement among young English ex-protestants encouraged in their revolt by Charles Darwin 'newly broached doctrine of Evolution'. As a result, Fitzgerald's Rubaiyat become suddenly famous and is now, for its length, the most frequent source of modern entries in English Dictionaries of Familiar quotations and a true mumpsimus".

Fitzgerald was that successful translator who discovered the philosophy of the *Rubaiyat*. His great service was to give a certain order, and arranged Omar's verses into a connected sequence. His main object was to present the characteristics of Omar's thought, his pondering upon life

and death, the external mysteries of the whence, why and whither of man and the influence of external and irresponsible power upon him, and his resort to the pleasures of the oment as a refugee from the problem, and he arranged these characteristic in a connected form.

In Victorian age, pessimism was that strand which inspired most of the poets of the time. <sup>6</sup>"The age needed (amid much else) the elegiac note, and it was Fitzgerald who supplied it. His *Rubaiyat* is an elegy upon human life. Its original was an epicurean poem, satirizing religion, denying the soul's immortality, and exhorting us to appreciate the pleasures of this world. Omar is certainly not without his own tenderness and pathos; but what he glorifies in wine is wine. Fitzgerald, who supplied good wines for his guests, but himself lived upon 'milk and meal and grass', with the occasional indulgence of a turnip, was not the man to sing the praises of alcoholic elation. The wine of his poem is obviously emblematic, it indicates mortal joy". The *Rubaiyat* is the expression of philosophy of life. The poet muses pessimistically on the passing of time. He is repeatedly giving stress on death's certainty and expresses his views on death in different ways. Sometime he compares life with bird and sometime with snow. He presents every aspect of



death. Death will come definitely and no one will return after death. This theme is presented in this quatrain.

7"And, as the Cock crew, those who stood before  
The Tavern shouted – "Open then the Door !  
You know how little while we have to stay,  
And, once departed, may return no more".

Death will come to everyone who was born. It does not care about the place or status of any men. Many great men like Rustam and Hatim did not live for ever and died, this message has been conveyed through the quatrain. Again in another quatrain he says that death is definite and it depends on you how you pass your life, happily or mournfully. Its every moment is passing like those leaves which fall one by one. This comparison is beautifully presented by the poet in these lines.

8"The wine of Life keeps oozing drop by drop,  
The Leaves of Life keep falling one by one".

Time is passing quickly and death could come any time. The uncertainty of life has been compared with that bird who is prepared to fly.

9"The Bird of Time has but a little way  
To flutter - and the Bird is on the Wing".

The beautiful intermingling of pessimism and optimism could be seen in this quatrain in which he welcome the

morning which comes with new roses but on the other hand he mourns because it is left to those who were with it yesterday.

<sup>10</sup>"Each Morn a thousand Roses brings, you say;  
Yes, but where leaves the Rose of yesterday"?

The vanity of the world's glories give sorrow to the poet so he calls his beloved to fill the cup with wine and enjoy life so that he can forget the reality of death for some time.

<sup>11</sup>"Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,  
Before we too into the Dust descent;  
Dust into Dust, and under Dust to lie,  
Sans Wine, sans song, sans Singer, and – Sans End!

Further he says that all saints and learned persons were curious to know about that world where everyone goes after death and in their life time they always discussed this topic with each other but never got any information. Till their death, they were as thirsty as before; Even now they all die.

<sup>12</sup>"Why, all the Saints and Sages who discuss'd  
Of the Two Worlds so wisely – they are thrust  
Like foolish Prophets forth; their Words to Scorn  
Are scatter'd, and their Mouths are stopt with Dust".

Life's short period has been compared with wind and water.

<sup>13</sup>"I came like Water, and like Wind I go".

Besides death, fate is another aspect which has been discussed by the poet in *Rubaiyat*. He says that man can do

only work. The result is in the hand of fate. This theme is presented like this

<sup>14</sup>"Up from Earth's, Centre through the Seventh Gate  
I rose, and on the Throne of Saturn sate,  
And many a Knot unravel'd by the Road;  
But not the Master-knot of Human Fate".

In another quatrain he compares human's life with the game of chess which God is playing. Night and days are chequer board's block and human beings are the pieces of this board. As pieces move here and there and in the end go back in the closet lays so is man, spent life here and there and at last died.

Man has to surrender to the power of fate. One cannot change one's luck, whatever is written in one's fate, one has to follow. This power of fate could be seen in this quatrain.

<sup>15</sup>"The Moving Finger writes; and having writ,  
Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit  
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,  
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it".

and further the poet explains in another quatrain that what will happen to everyman is predecided. When God created man, He also wrote his fate and now it can not be changed :

<sup>16</sup>"And the first Morning of Creation wrote  
What the Last Dawn of Reackoning shall and read".

In such a state of life where much has to be endured, the best way out of the stew is to eat, drink and be merry without caring for the future :

<sup>17</sup>"Unborn tomorrow and dead yesterday  
Why fret about them in today be sweet?"

In this poem, Fitzgerald lays emphasis on hedonism grounded on scepticism. Doubt and struggle were the tendencies of the victorian age and this doubt has been expressed by the poet in this poem. Nothing is decided and even one's yesterday is uncertain :

<sup>18</sup>"Think then you are To-day what Yesterday  
You were - To-MORROW you shall not be less".

Uncertainty is everywhere but one thing is certain and that is death, this theme is beautifully presented by the poet in different ways:

<sup>19</sup>"And fear not lest Existence closing your  
Account and mine, should know the like no more;  
The Eternal Saki from that Bowl has pour's  
Millions of Bubbles like us, and will pour".

Time is passing very quickly and man is so busy in his worldly affairs that he is unaware that how much time he has wasted but when he sees towards calender then finds:

<sup>20</sup>"Unborn Tomorrow, and dead yesterday".

*Rubaiyat* is the criticism of life. <sup>21</sup>"If we probe behind the

symbol or metaphor, we shall discover a noble philosophy which will guide us through the mysteries of life and destiny".

Thought of death freed poet from the world's affairs. By experience he learns that worldly desires cause misery; by resignation in God man attains peace of mind. Worldly wealth could not stop death whether prince or pauper all must die then what avails the worldly wealth? This is also unknown that after death where we will go so we should prepare ourselves for second world because death is certain

<sup>22</sup>"Oh threats of Hell and Hopes of paradise!  
One thing at least is certain - This life flies;  
One thing is certain and the rest is Lies;  
The Flower that once has blown for ever dies".

Nobody knows that way on which after death every one will go. Curiosity is the nature of man and in life time every one wants to discover that road on which he will pass after death but who goes on that road never returns to tell the truth. Poet is also curious so he sent his soul to discover that way and soul tells that there are two ways one goes, towards Heaven and another towards hell, and the decision will be made on the basis of those works which

one had done in one's life time. So everyone should do good works, which will lead him towards the way of heaven.

<sup>23</sup>"The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon  
Turns Ashes - or it prospers; and anon,  
Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face,  
Lighting a little hour or two - is gone".

Life is short so man should acquire true knowledge before his death. The man is made of dust and he will remain the part of dust. Life's brevity has been compared with snow that melts quickly upon the desert so in this short period man should not indulge himself in materialistic world and should acquire knowledge for another world. The fear of death could be noticed in this quatrain :

<sup>24</sup>"A Moment's Halt - a momentary taste.  
Of BEING from the Well a mid the waste —  
And Lo! the phantom Caravan has reach'd  
The NOTHING it set and from - Oh make haste!".

Poet is puzzled by the cruelty of fate and the ignorance of man. He reflects his view on the frailty of human existence :

<sup>25</sup>"For some we loved, the loveliest and the best  
That from his Vintage rolling Time hath prest,  
Have drunk their Cup a Round or two before,  
And one by one crept silently to rest".

The stay of man in this world is very short and he has to go to another world. This time which he is passing here is very short. Time of death is not fixed, it could come

any time. Even man is not sure that the breath he is taking in, will come out or not.

Thus in this poem the philosophy of life is discovered. Death, fate and wine are the main theme which have been discussed in this poem. The popularity of this poem is not only due to the fact that Omar found an interpreter like FitzGerald but also because the ideology of quatrains has similarity with the doctrines of Mill, Spenser, Huxley, Tyndale which appealed to the people of England at that time. *Rubaiyat* is the representation of the ideas and images of the original in a form not altogether diverse from their own, but perfectly adapted to the new condition of time, place, custom and habit of mind in which they reappear.

Fitzgerald has a depth of perception. His translation of *Rubaiyat*, is full of the wistful melancholy of a nature greater than its destiny. His voice vibrates with passion. <sup>26</sup>"His poem is essentially pessimistic, intellectual, and calmly pathetic combines an imaginative Romanticism with the discipline of a sober form. By a unique stroke of fortune, the translation of the medieval Persian quatrains, modernized with bold yet delicate skill, moulded and

arranged in a personal way, expresses the inner most soul and subtlest essence of nineteenth-century melancholy, which acquiring the depth of a far distant past, seems to spread as well over the whole human destiny".

Fitzgerald's translation of Rubaiyat shows his deep interest in the problems of life, death and futurity for that. In Omar's original poem, there is a touch of humour As Arthur J. Arberry says, <sup>27</sup>"Omar is above all other things a poet of rationalist pessimism, but unlike the majority of pessimists he never takes himself or his view to tragic moments, and therefore his style is lightened and enlivened by a very delicate sense of humour". But in FitzGerald's version, it is totally absent. There is an oriental-cum-victorian atmosphere in the poem. The sole purpose behind this poem is to show the right way of life for which God has commanded to man to follow and his sole aim is to gain the grace of God by obedience to His commands." <sup>28</sup>"The Rubaiyat are a 'criticism of life', not in some far off country and among unfamiliar men, but here and now-the life all have to live, the destiny all have to look forward to, the bounds of thought against which all must beat in vain."

In his translation, Fitzgerald habitually concealed his own thought on the mysteries which perplexed Omar.



Omar and his interpreter both acted according to the circumstances in which they lived. Both were indeed men of subtle intellect and high imagination. Both revolted against their country's false religion and consoled themselves by the hope of good days. The quatrains follow one another according to mood. The fear of death and grave has been balanced by the ideal possibilities of Fate.

<sup>29</sup>"The *Rubaiyat* – a more serene, more cheerful and more contented document – is an elegy on all faiths whatsoever. It states its case with a certain touch of melancholy, but without any cry of distress. Too resigned to be poignant, too philosophical to be bitter about it, it dismisses the dream, and accepts with appetite - almost with gratitude - what is left." The sad music of humanity and lyrical cry could be heard in *Rubaiyat*. The victorian hope and determination to face the melancholic problems of life and if can not solve then to express it by art, was the aim of the poet and the result is *Rubaiyat*. In this poem he questions the meaning of life and tries to get the answer but always fails. Religious doubt and shadowy faith set the tone of the poem. <sup>30</sup>"The impact of the *Rubaiyat* on the Victorians was startling. It wakened them to the oriental view of life, especially its fatalism, which is so foreign to the

Western mind. Hedonism they knew, but it was never presented more charmingly. The slow, haunting music of the stanza (the first, second, and fourth lines rhyming, the third unrhymed) and the perfect word and phrase make the poem an ideal companion for an indolent hour. Fitzgerald was only a translator, not a creator in the technical sense, but as Swinburne said: "His daring genius gave Omar Khayyam a place forever among the greatest English poets".

Fitzgerald's version of the Rubaiyat is one of the most beautiful long poems of the Victorian poetry, its melancholic richness, the power of imagination, the lyrical quality and deepest thought make the poem, one of the glories of English poems. Its popularity was due to the grace and charm with which it expressed Victorian views and values. <sup>31</sup>"The Rubaiyat, by contrast, is always sensuous and always melancholy. It never lets us forget the sadness of life, it never disturbs our sense of enjoyment of the moment. In it one seems to find the most perfect fusion of artistic rapture with the spiritual pang".

A remarkable texture of sadness, sensuality and disillusionment could be found in the whole work. There is a Victorian atmosphere in the poem. The melancholic theme

of the poem "drink and be merry for tomorrow we will die - describes the mood of many people in England during victorian period. FitzGerald was individualist. He always kept himself aloof from society. This isolation is also the reason behind his meloncholy which is reflected in this poem. FitzGerald was an undeniable influence on the late victorian literature of pessimism mainly through his adaptation of *Rubaiyat*, a poem whose extra-ordinary popularity survives even today. <sup>32</sup>"It has all the merit of a remarkable original production, and its excellence is the highest testimony that could be given, to the essential impressiveness and worth of the Persian poet. It is the work of a poet inspired by the work of a poet; not a copy, but a reproduction, not a translation, but the redelivery of a poetic inspiration."

Fitzgerald's Omar is best compared with Horace. Like Horace, FitzGerald is also unknown with that purpose for which man has been created. But the little difference between both is that Horace left this question unsolved and concentrated on other things but Fitzgerald is not able to leave this unanswered and this question strikes him again and again :

<sup>33</sup>"Yet Ah, that spring should vanish with the Rose!  
That youth's sweet-scented manuscript should  
close!

The Nightingale that in the branches sang,  
Ah whence, and whither flown again, who knows!

He compares human being with the pots who have been made by God in different sizes and shapes. These creations could break at any time and will again be the part of dust. This is the fear, which makes the poet restless. Sometimes he wants to overcome this grief and tries to forget all this fear so he drinks wine but its effect does not make the thought of death vanish from his mind and he again becomes restless :

<sup>34</sup>"Yesterday This Day's Madness did prepare;  
Tomorrow's Silence, Triumph, or Despair."  
Drink! for you know not whence you came, nor why:  
Drink! for you know not why you go, nor where."

This call for wine is a revolt against the fixed ideas of his age. In his time, wine and love were strictly prohibited in Puritan way of life and by calling for wine and love he want to express his anger against his country's false religion. According to Fitzgerald, Omar's wine is also the spiritual wine and not the juice of the grape.

Fitzgerald's *Rubaiyat* appeals to the people because it is related to the human life. His philosophy inspires, and

it was the influence of that age in which people were losing their faith. It was a period of social and religious unrest. The poet's deep concern with the problems of his own age could be seen in this poem. This is a unique translation which has more originality than any other translation. It is almost like the re-appearance of Khayyam in an English heart and an English brain.

## REFERENCES

1. George F. Maine, 'Edward Fitzgerald', Rubaiyat of Oman Khayyam Rendered into English verse by Edward Fitzgerald, Ed. George F. Maine, Collins Clear type press: London and Glasgow. 1969, p. 18.
2. A.C.Benson, 'Habits-character' Edward Fitzgerald, London: MacMillan & Co., Limited, 1905, p. 182.
3. Arthur J. Arberry, The Romance of the Rubaiyat, George Allen & Unwin Ltd. 1959, London, p. 27.
4. R.D. Trivedi, 'Victorian Literature Poetry', Compendious History of English Literature, New Delhi, Vikas Publisher, 1992, p. 497.
5. Robert Graves and Omar Ali Shah, 'The Fitz-Omar Cult by Robert Graves', The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayamm, Cassell & Company Ltd., 1967, p.2.
6. A.Y. Campbell, 'Edward Fitzgerald', The Great Victorian Ed. Massinger, Hazell Wats and Viney Ltd., 1932, London, p. 207.
7. Ed. & George F. Maine, Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam Rendered into English verse, Fifth Edition, op. cit. P.152
8. Ibid. p. 154.

9. Ibid. p. 154.
10. Ibid. p. 155.
11. Ibid. p. 162.
12. Ibid. p. 163.
13. Ibid. p. 164.
14. Ibid. P. 166.
15. Ibid. P. 186.
16. Ibid. P. 187.
17. Ibid. P. 171
18. Ibid. P. 171
19. Ibid. P. 173
20. Ibid. P. 179.
21. Ibid. p. 29
22. Ibid. p. 182.
23. Ibid., p. 158.
24. Ibid., p. 174.
25. Ibid., p. 161.
26. Louis & Cazamin, 'Victorian Poetry', History of English Literature, MacMillan, 1996, p. 1191.
27. Arthur, J. Arberry, 'Introduction', Omar Khayyam, New Haven Yale University Press, 1952, P. 27.

28. Hugh Walker, 'The Turn of the century: New Influences', The Literature of the Victorian Era, Cambridge Press, 1913, P. 489.
29. Gearge F. Maine, op. cit., p. 10.
30. R.D. Trivedi, A Compondious History of English Literature, op.cit., p. 497.
31. Massenger, Great Vicotrian, op.cit., p. 209.
32. A.J. Arberry, The Romance of the Rubaiyat, op.cit., p. 26.
33. Gearge F. Maine, op. cit., p. 198.
34. Ibid., p. 187.



## ***Chapter - V***

### **CONCLUSION**

A careful study of Victorian poetry brings out several strains, the chief of them being a pre-occupation with the somber and pessimistic view of life. In Victorian age, the new science, which was changing the intellectual outlook of mankind and threatening the traditional values enshrined in religion and education, produced a number of poets. Among them Arthur Hugh Clough, James Thomson and Edward Fitzgerald are influenced by the spirit of age.

<sup>1</sup>"It was the endeavour to intellectualise the visions of the imaginative life that led Arnold, Clough, Fitzgerald and James Thomson into that mood of wistful melancholy, that crystallised soon into a more or less pessimistic criticism of life". This tone of melancholy has not been properly investigated. The present thesis examines the note of pessimism in the works of Arthur Hugh Clough, James Thomson and Edward Fitz Gerald. The study addresses the extent to which these poets were influenced by the spirit of their age and their own personal experiences. The method used in this study is a close reading of poems and biography of each of the three poets.

The first poet under study is Arthur Hugh Clough. In the great spheres of human thought e.g. religion, morals,

social life, his poems reflect the complex tendencies of his age and surroundings. He was a fellow student of Arnold at Rugby and at Oxford during the years of Newman's influence. His serious nature was stirred to its depth by the movement. He resigned his Oxford fellowship in rejection of required Anglican orthodoxy and wrote a poem *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich*. This poem clearly refers to his own intellectual state. It is a revolt of cultured mind against the hypocrisy and corruption of modern society. In *The Bothie*, Clough expresses the belief that in a successful love relationship he may discover certain values which are not readily to be found in modern life. Phillip's attraction towards a girl, who does hard work in the field, reveals Clough's love for nature. Thus he feels the attracted to reality; and then abandoning his conventional academic career, he migrates to New Zealand. This escape also reflect a victorian attitude. His rejection of an easy compromise is the reason behind his alienation. Clough's hero is alienated from society due to the opposite view. It is extremely painful but it has to be endured with courage. As a poet, Clough explores his world for help in a sorry time. He deals with the problems of poor men and position of women in *The Bothie*.

Clough's next poem *Amours-de-Voyage* describes the mood of a Victorian who is living in a changing world and is unhappy about it. He analyzes his time as confused and bewildering. Its hero, Claude, is a hesitant youngman who is unable to take a decision about every matter whether it is love or war. He visits Rome and tells about the Revolution through the letters. He insists that revolutionaries are victims as well and that revolt is actually futile. This reveals his pessimism, here he also points out the futility of all political action. <sup>2</sup>"Claude, Clough's male correspondent from Italy, seems bemused by human relationships and bewildered by the violence which intrudes both into his Roman Sightseeing and into his English political assumptions". Claude is disappointed in the situation; He just shares the feeling of pain; when the time demands action, he fails. This is the reason that he is not successful in his love affair. His failure is due to his lack of confidence which is a characteristic feature of victorian age.

Clough's *Dipsychus* is a poem on religious issues. He was saddened by the spectacle of chaotic creeds, distracted lives, commercialism and moral degradation. In such a world, it seems to Clough the central problem is a moral one; it is how to conduct life. This poem is a record of

his search for the values of calm, centrality and morality. *Dipsychus* illustrates the introspective self-analysis with which the age discusses the fundamental problem of existence. The general decline of faith and Clough's own resultant bewilderment and melancholy constitute the theme of *Dipsychus*. In his pessimistic attitude, Clough reflected the mood which was spreading over England, as the result of the loss of the consolations of religious faith, and doubt of the power of reform to deal with the increasing misery of the poor - a mood from which no artist could be completely escaped.

~~X/~~ Second poet who shares the feeling of pain with Clough is James Thomson. It is pertinent to suggest that Thomson's melancholia resulting from unhappy childhood left its indelible mark on his work. The feeling of misery and melancholy throbs almost in every poem of Thomson, except few earlier lyrics. To the poet, the world is a vale of tears, a place to endure and to suffer. The central theme of his work is the pain of living and the somber majesty of despair which is treated by Thomson in detail in *The City of Dreadful Night*, *The Doom of a City*, *To Our Ladies of Death*, *Insomnia* and some other short lyrics. *The City of Dreadful*

*Night* which is his famous poem, reflects his temper of melancholy, influenced by the death of his beloved Matilda. In this poem, Thomson deals with all the phases of his personal grief and sorrow, discusses the conflict between science and faith.

In *The City of Dreadful Night*, the world is represented as dreary as a desert. Man's lot in the universe is one of helplessness, hopelessness and despair. In this poem the poet is visiting in the city of darkness and his companions are despair and solitude. He describes the condition of that man who is lonely and solitary even in a populous world. This poem also reveals his aesthetic nature. He blames God for all the suffering of human beings. In grief and despair, man leads his life without experiencing the glow or joy in life. In *The City* the tragedy and pathos of man is pathetically presented.

His another poem *The Doom of a City* warns people about the wrath of God. This also recalls the memory of his beloved. *To Our Ladies of Death* and *Insomnia* describe his gloom on the unforgettable moments of his beloved's death. Thus, over all, Thomson's poetry has an air of melancholy, a sense of loneliness and of quiet desperation. It is the poetry

that contains inexorable despair and he employs many symbolic images of darkness. There is no hope in Thomson's city and human progress seems impossible. He also pointed out the threat of mechanism which was the cause of alienation in the Victorian age. At last, James Thomson appears as a poet 'without hope and without God in the world'.

The pessimistic characteristics of the concluding decades of the century found most poignant utterance in the 'Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam' by Edward Fitzgerald. He reflects the attitude of a true Victorian who is torn between belief and doubt, preaches wistfully to a sceptical world. In *Rubaiyat*, the miserable spectacle of men marching mournfully to the grave is poignantly struck. It lays emphasis on the power of destiny in human life. Man is a puppet in the hand of Destiny. The over-powering force of fate in human life is represented in *Rubaiyat*. He questions the meaning of life which was the topic of discussion among victorian poets. He suggests a way to escape from the burdens and problems of society and from the moral seriousness, and it is the pleasure of present life. Fitzgerald's melancholy sprang from many causes, the chief

of them being the contemplation of man's destiny from the hopeless tangle of his own age, and from the course of life of mortal men on earth. The failure of marriage, death of friends, loss of faith in the age, and above all the melancholic state of his mind are further responsible factors for his pessimistic outlook on life. The popularity of *Rubaiyat* is a measure of the extent to which the victorian view of life had been undermined.

The result of this study suggests that the works of these poets reflect not only their lives and thoughts but also the spirit of the age. A readable biography of every writer, shows how he lived and worked; how he met success or failure and how his age influenced him. Behind every poet's pessimism, there is the spirit of age and his personal experiences. They were asked to respond to the question of existence in a restless world and it could be noticed that there is a slight difference in their answers. Clough's attitude could not be said optimistic but it has a silver in its cloud. On the other hand, there is darkness in the work of James Thomson and his meloncholy is altogether sickening or sad. Edward Fitzgerald has a sceptical attitude in this matter. He left everything to Fate. One common problem of



these three poets is the alienation and they deal it from their own points of view. To some extent, it is justified to say that the work of a poet is rooted in his age and hence the pessimistic note of Arthur Hugh Clough, James Thomson and Edward Fitz Gerald is the ruling passion of their poetry.

**REFERENCES**

1. Crompton & Rickette, 'The Pessimistic Note in Victorian Poetry', A History of English Literature, p. 463.
2. Andrew Sanders, 'High Victorian Literature', The Short Oxford History of English Literature, Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 449.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Aldis Wright, W. (ed.) 1902. *Letters and Literary Remains of Edward Fitzgerald*, Vol. VII, Macmillan.

Arberry, A.J. 1952. *Omar Khayyam*, New Haven, Yale University Press.

Arbery, A.J. 1959. *The Romance of the Rubaiyat*, George Allen & Unwin Ltd.

Bagchi, J. (ed.) 1991. *Literature, Society and Ideology in the Victorian era*, Sterling Publisher, New Delhi.

Barnard, R., 1994. *A Short History of English Literature*, Oxford : Blackwell Publishers.

Basil, W. 1965. *The Eighteenth Century Background*, Penguin Books.

Batho, E. 1938. *Victorian and after 1830-1914*, London, Cresset Press.

Benson, A.C. 1905. *Edward Fitzgerald*, London, Macmillan & Co. Ltd.

Berger, E.B.G. 1970. *Arthur Hugh Clough : The growth of a poet's mind*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge.

Blamires, H. 1984. *A short History of English Literature*, Methuen London and New York.

Bose, A. 1957. *Early Victorian Poetry of Social Ferment*, Aligarh Muslim University.

Brawn, E.K. (ed.) 1942. *Victorian Poetry*, The Ronald Press Company, New York.

Cazamin, L. 1966. *History of English Literature*, Macmillan.

Daiches, D. 1969. *Some Late Victorian Attitude*, University of California Press.

Daiches, D., *A Critical History of English Literature*, Vol. III, New Delhi, Allied Publishers.

Decker, C.R. 1952. *The Victorian Conscience*, N.Y.

? Twongue Publisher.

Denison Ross, E. (ed.) 1938. *The Golden Cockerel Rubaiyat*,  
The Golden Cockerel Press.

Dickinson, E., 1938. *A Pageant of English Poetry*, London,  
James Nisbet.

Dobell, B. (ed.) 1880. *Vane's story, weddah and Om-el-  
Benain and other poems*, Vol. II, London.

Dobell, B. (ed.) 1895. *Poetical Works of James Thomson*,  
London.

Dobell, B. 1910. *The Laureate of Pessimism*, London.

Douglas, B. 1969. *Mythology and the Romantic Tradition in  
English poetry*, Harvard University Press,  
Cambridge.

Elton, O. 1928. *A Survey of English Literature, 1830-1880*,  
Vol. II, Edward Arnold & Co.

Evan, I. 1966. *English Poetry in the later 19<sup>th</sup> century*,  
London, Methuen.

Evans, I. 1963. *A short History of English Literature*, G.B.  
Hunt Beraut.

kk

Evans, R.J. 1969. *The Victorian Age 1815-1914*, London,  
Edward Arnold.

Long, W.J. 1999. *English Literature : Its History and its  
significance*, Kalyani Publishers.

Lucas, F.L. 1940. *Ten Victorian poets*, Cambridge  
University Press.

Maine, G.F. (ed.) 1969. *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam :*  
*Rendered into English verse* by Edward  
Fitzgerald, Collins, Clear type press, London.

Massinger (ed.) 1932. *The Great Victorian*, Hazellwats and  
Viney Ltd.

Meeker, J.E. 1917. *The Life and Poetry of James Thomson*,  
Yale University Press.

Mulhauser, F.L. (ed.) 1957. *The Correspondence of Arthur  
Hugh Clough*, Oxford Clarendon Press.

Narrington, A.L.P. (ed.) 1968. *The Poems of Arthur Hugh  
Clough*, London, Oxford University Press.

Reeves, J. 1964. *A Short History of English poetry 1340-1940*, London, Mercurry Books.

Renwick, W.L. 1959. *English Literature : 1789-1815*, Oxford Clarendon Press.

Rickett, A.C. 1963. *A History of English Literature : From Earlier times to 1917*, Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd.

Saintsbury, G. 1929. *A short History of English Literature*, Macmillan & Co. Ltd. London.

Sampson, G. 1941. *Concise Cambridge History of English Literature*.

Sanders, A. 2002. *The short Oxford History of English Literature*, Oxford University Press.

Sanders, C. 1956. *Victorian poets : a guide to research*, Harvard University Press.

Shah, O.A. and Graves, R. 1967. *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*, Cassell and Company Ltd.



Shannon, F.E. 1952. *Tennyson and the Reviewers*,  
Harvard University Press, Cambridge.

Smith, B. (ed.) 1869. *Arthur Hugh Clough, Poems and  
Prose remains : with a selection from his letters  
and Memoir*, vol. 2, London.

Somerwell, D.C. 1964. *English Thought in the 19<sup>th</sup>  
Century*, London Methuen.

Stange, R.B.G. 1967. *Mathew Arnold : The poet as  
Humanist*, Princeton University Press, New  
Jersey.

Terhune, A.M. 1947. *The Life of Edward Fitzgerald*, Oxford  
University Press.

Timko, M. 1966. *Innocent Victorian : The Satiric poetry of  
Arthur Hugh Clough*, Ohio University Press.

Tirtha, S.W. 1941. *The Nector of Grace : Omar Khayyam's  
life and work*, Government Control press,  
Hyderabad.

Trilling, L. 1939. *Mathew Arnold*, London.

Trilling, L. 1967. *The experience of literature*, New York,  
Hult, Rinehart and Winston.

Trivedi, R.T. 1952. *A Compendious History of English  
Literature*, New Delhi : Vikas Publishers.

Untermeyer, L. 1960. *Lives of the poets*, London Allen.

Viney, S. 1950. *100 Years of English Literature*, Duck  
Worth, London.

Walker, H. 1910. *The Literature of the Victorian era*,  
Oxford University Press.

Ward, T.H. 1930. *English Poets*, London, Macmillan.

Welby, T.E. 1936. *A Popular History of English Literature*,  
Methuen and Co. Ltd. London.

Westland, P. 1950. *The Victorian Age, 1830-1880*, Vol. V,  
The English University Press Ltd. London.

Whibley, C. (ed.) 1913. *Poems of Arthur Hugh Clough*,  
Macmillan and Co. Ltd. London.

Whinfield, E.H. 1901. *The Quatrains of Omar Khayyam*,  
Second edition.

Williams, D. 1969. *Too Quick Despairer : The life and Work of Arthur Hugh Clough*, Rupert Hart, Davis, London.

Young, G.M. 1936. *Victorian England Portrait of an age*, Oxford.

### **Articles :**

Campbell, IAN, 1978. "And I Burn Too"; Thomson's City of Development', vol. 16, Victorian poetry, West Virginia University.

Crawford, Robert, 1985. 'James Thomson and T.S. Eliot, Victorian poetry', vol. 23, West Virginia University.

Seller, W.Y. 1862. (From a review in North British, November.

Sharpe, William, 1984. 'Learning to Read the City', Victorian Poetry, Vol. 22, West Virginia University Press.